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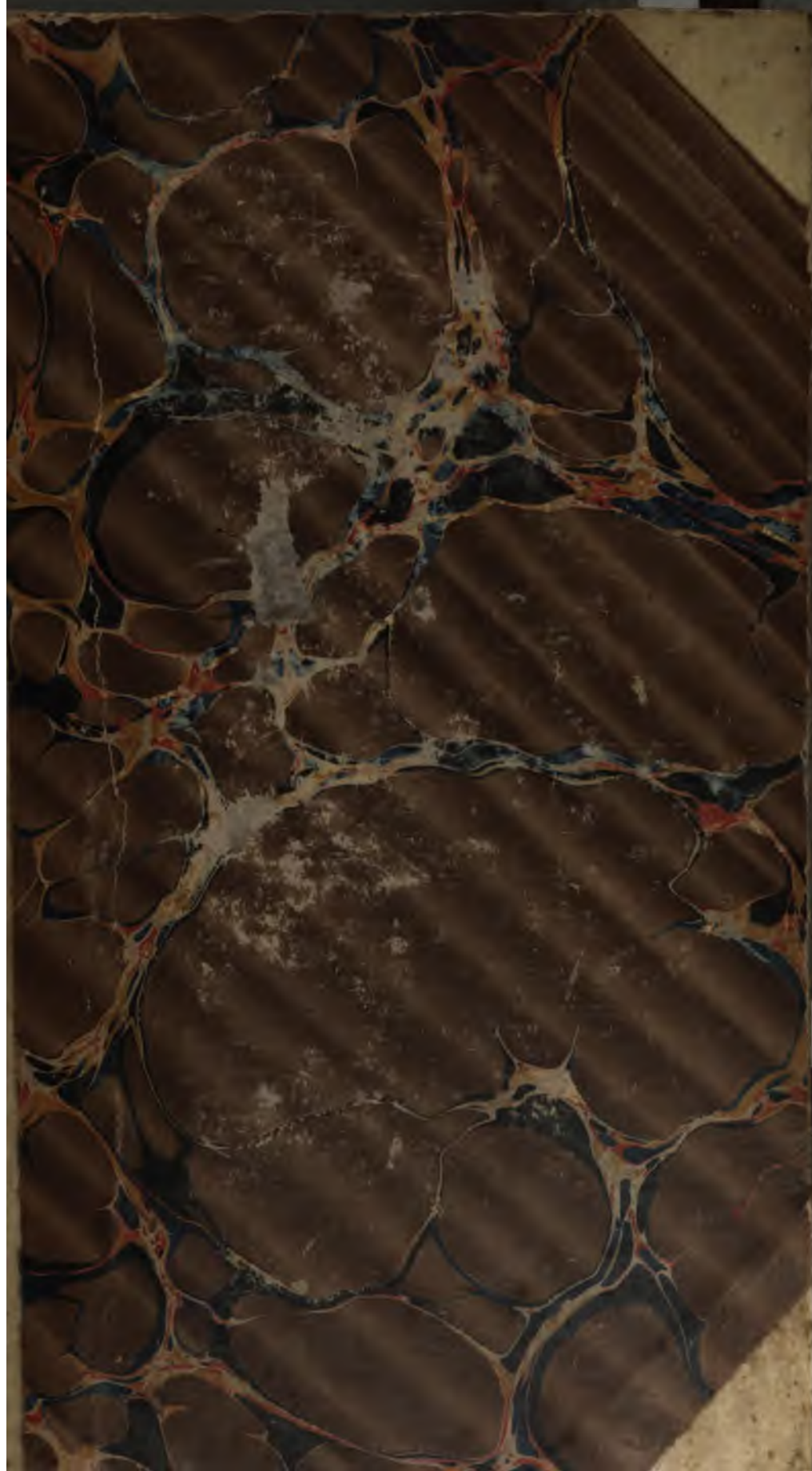
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C. F. Stratton Reader.



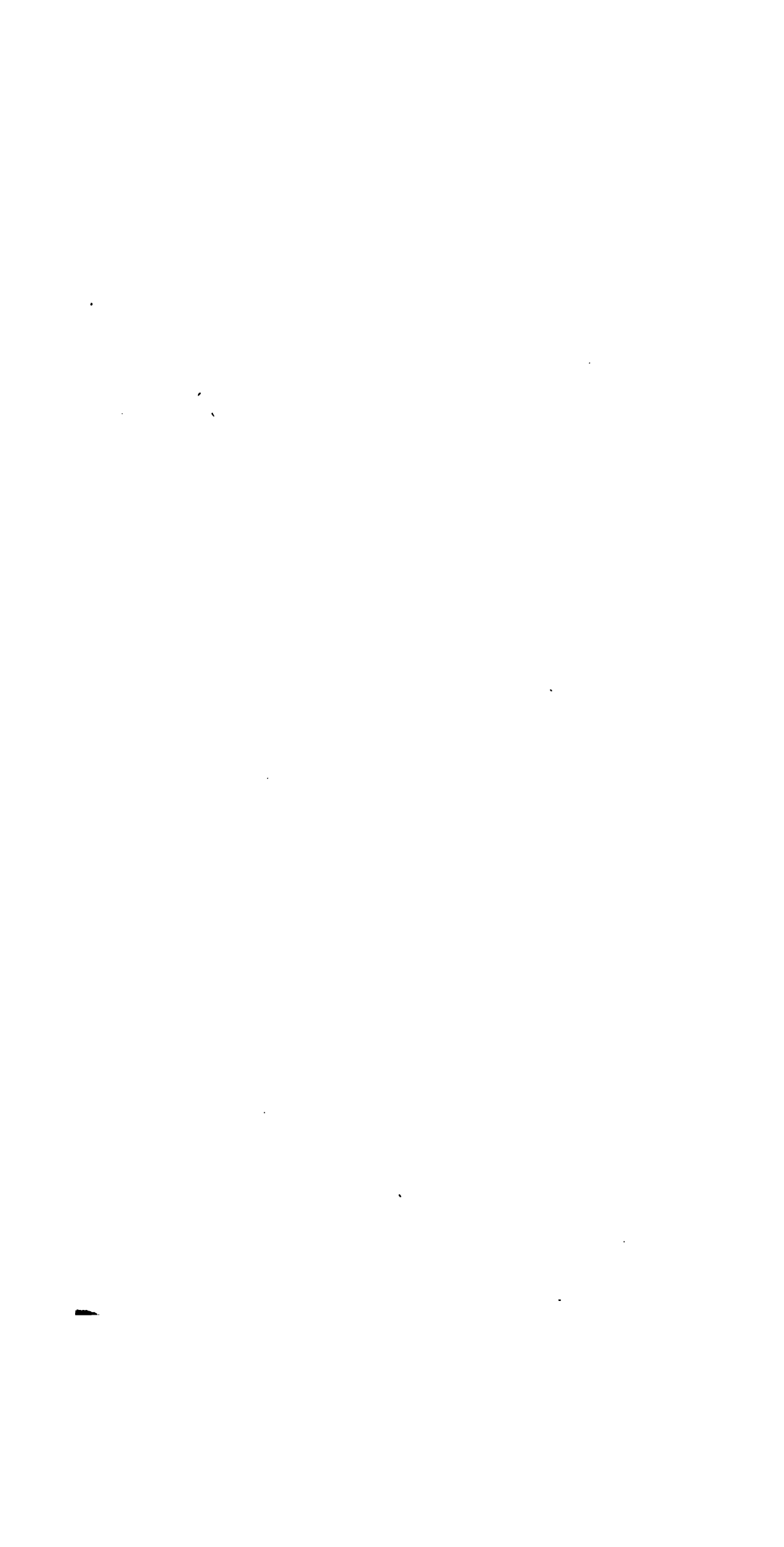
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E. J. Mullen Reader
anno 1820

MATERIALS
FOR
T H I N K I N G.

By WILLIAM BURDON.

FIFTH EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1820.

265. i. 208.

Printed by William Guthrie, Blythe.

(dated May 31st 1823)

Miss Burdon has great pleasure in sending Mr. Reader the copy of the Bishop of Exeter's letter she has so long promised him. She is very happy to hear that Mr. Reader is in perfect health and begs to be remembered to her. —

Letter of Dr. Bennett bishop of Exeter addressed to G. Ennor Esq. the author of the memoir.

"Your friend Mr. Burdon was a favorite pupil of mine when I was tutor at Gonville College in Cambridge, as a classical scholar he was much superior to any young man then tho' we had several at the time who have since highly distinguished themselves. The College did itself honour in unanimously electing him fellow, tho' his political opinions which he always manfully

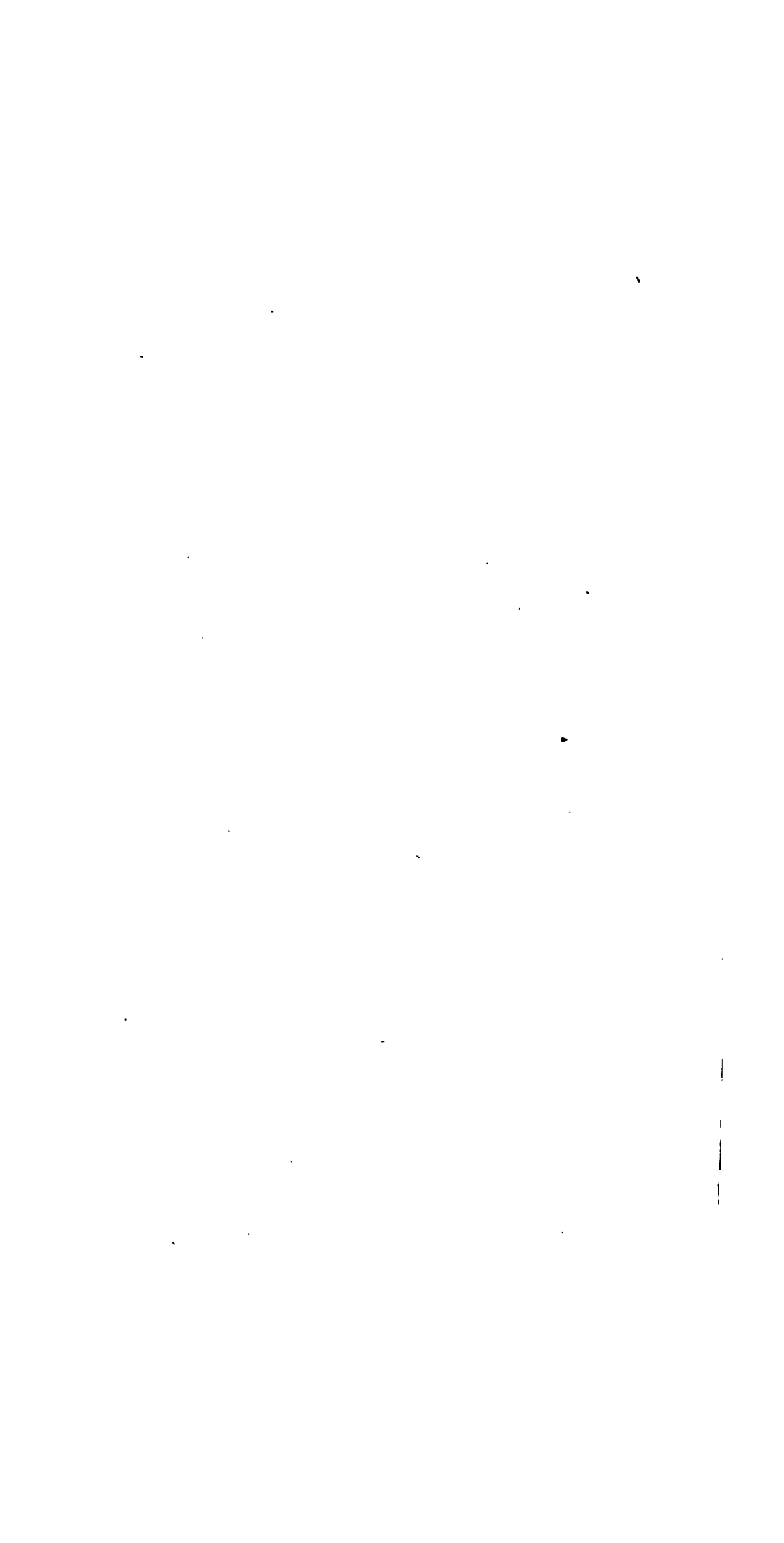
advanced - differed very much from
those of the society in general. He resign-
ed his fellowship afterwards from an un-
willingness as I believe to enter into
Priests orders which our statutes require
after a certain period - but this did not
happen till after I had left the college.
We were then thrown into such different
walks of life that we hardly ever met
but I had ~~the~~ always the satisfaction
and a heartfelt one it was of hearing
that he spoke of me with affection and
gratitude.

London. May 9th 1823

Amber



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though it may convince him, will not always influence his conduct, nor impel him to attempt the conviction of others. Truth makes few proselytes compared to error. Imagination has a wide dominion, that of reason is very limited. Ten thousand believe in the inventions of the one, for ten that rely on the deductions of the other. Hence it is that I have very small hopes of living to see morality get rid of religion; though I am convinced that religion reconciles some men to the evils of this world by the hopes of a better, and thus becomes the foe of morality.

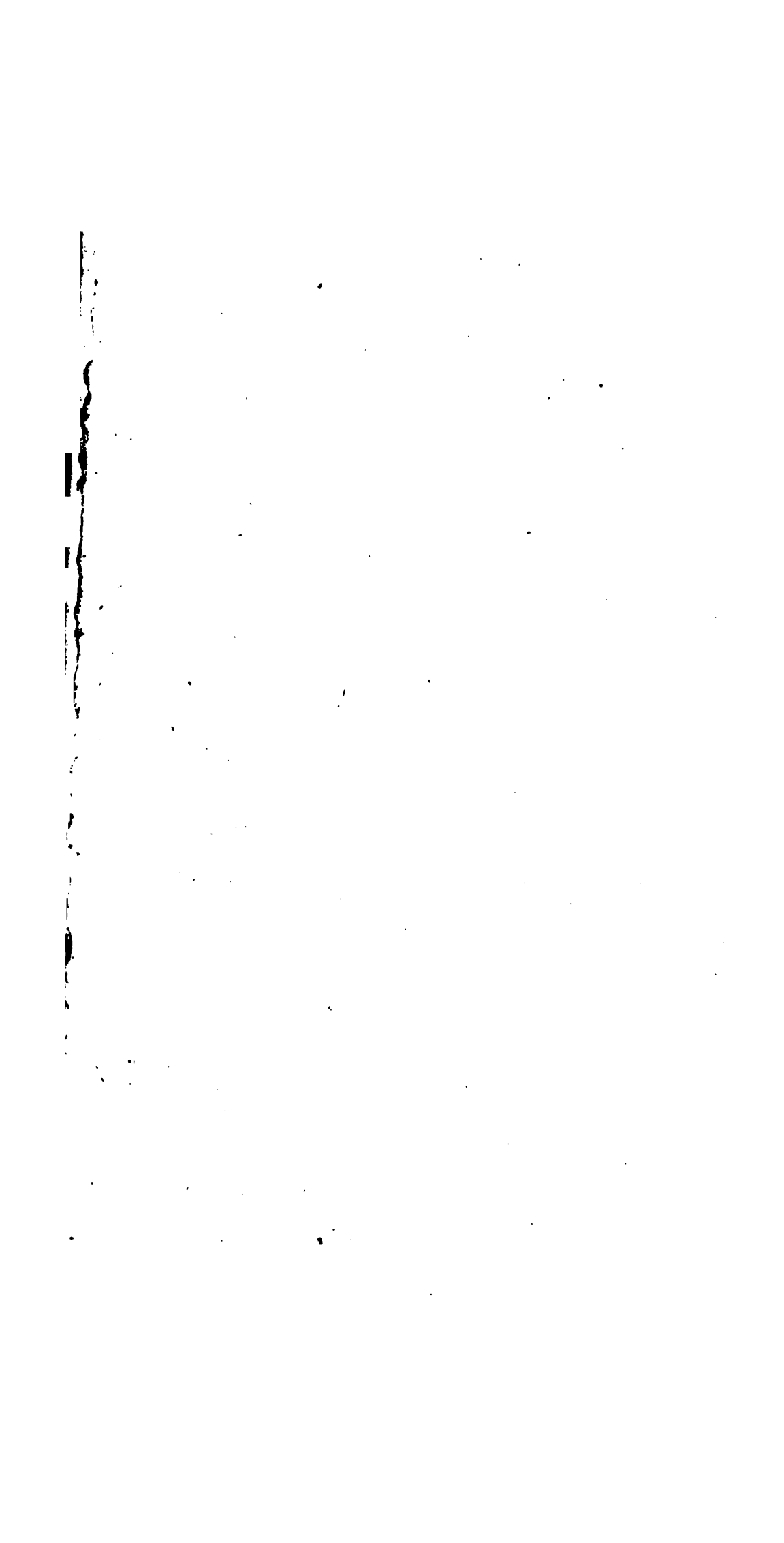
It is not many years since I first attempted to add my mite towards abating the force of party strifes and religious prepossessions, by the diffusion of more liberal sentiments; and I have seen a great change for the better on both these subjects.—How far I have contributed to this happy amendment I will not venture to determine.

Welbeck Street, June 7, 1817.

P R E F A C E

TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

It may be thought requisite that I should account for the circumstance of this Edition being called the Fifth, when the last was only the Third. The matter stands thus:—the first volume was published by itself in numbers, and of that there were two editions. It was then published with the second, and afterwards a second edition of the two.—The present is therefore the fifth edition of the first volume, and the third of the second. This explanation will account for the whole being called the fifth edition.



MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM BURDON.

WILLIAM BURDON's father was a country gentleman, who possessed a small landed property in Yorkshire. About his middle age he speculated in different branches of business, and became a coal-owner. At this period he resided mostly at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in which town Mr. Burdon was born, the eleventh of September 1764. His mother's name was Wharton. Through her he inherited considerable landed estates in Durham and Northumberland. Mr. Burdon received the rudiments of education at the free grammar-school of his native town, whence he passed to Emmanuel college, Cambridge, in 1781. In 1786 he became Bachelor of Arts, and a Fellow in 1788. Indisposed to take orders, he resigned his fellowship in 1790. He then married, and for some years resided at Morpeth, pursuing his studies in almost uninterrupted retirement. His wife dying, he married a second time.

*his
family*

born 1764

*mother's
name
Wharton*

entered at

Emman: Coll

Cam: ab: 1781

Fell: B: a 1782

Fell: av: 1788

resigned 1790

married;

married

a 2^d time;

Issue

influence

Hartford

Morris

By his first marriage he had five, and by the second, two children. In 1805 he removed to Hartford. From 1807 until his death in 1818 he continued to spend his summers at Hartford, his maternal estate, passing his winters in London, and occasionally visiting Brighton for a short time during the spring.

Such an abstract of life and death is more than the generality of mankind deserve to have published of them—so insipid, so passive, so uninteresting are their existence. Not so was Mr. Burdon, who deserves a much larger notice than the writer of this memoir is enabled to give from his short personal acquaintance with the author of the “Materials for Thinking.”

It is true Mr. Burdon's life is not connected with any great political event, civil or military;—he was no party leader; he neither discovered new worlds nor enlarged the boundaries of science;—his life exhibits no particulars which excite the gross passions or the extravagant admiration of the world; yet some peculiarities formed his character and studies, not less novel than exemplary.

educated a
ry, but of
is principles

is chosen
his act

passed
in Pitt

Mr. Burdon was reared in Tory principles. They were sown, but they could not take root in his understanding. When he emancipated himself from their imposition does not appear, if indeed they had ever influenced his mind or actions; for at College he chose the following thesis for his act—*In summo reipublicæ discrimine, iniquo principi resistere licet*. I may also add, that when Mr. Pitt offered himself as a candidate for the University of Cambridge, Mr. Burdon, singly of all the brother-fellows, refused to vote for the Mini-

ster; which independent conduct Mr. Pitt pitifully represented.

On leaving the university, Mr. Burdon, having improved his reason and taste by a patient and extensive acquaintance with books, published various works on literature, politics, and philosophy. They are as follows: Three Letters addressed to the Bishop of Llandaff: Cambridge 1795.—A Few Words of Plain Truth on the Subject of the present Negotiation for Peace: Cambridge 1797.—An Examination of the Merits and Tendency of The Pursuits of Literature; in 2 parts: Newcastle 1799 first part, and 1800 the second part.—A Vindication of Pope and Grattan from the Attack of an Anonymous Defamer: Newcastle 1799.—Thoughts on Politics, Morality, and Literature: Newcastle 1800.—Materials for Thinking: 1803.—Unanimity in the present Contest recommended: Newcastle 1803.—Advice addressed to the Lower Ranks: 1803.—Life and Character of Bonaparte: 1804.—Poetry for Children: 1805.—Letters on the Affairs of Spain: 1809.—A Constitution for the Spanish Nation (from the Spanish of Estrada): 1810.—Introduction to the History of the Revolution in Spain (from the Spanish of Estrada): 1810.—Treatise on the Privileges of the House of Commons: 1810.—An Impartial Examination of the Dispute between Spain and her American Colonies (from the Spanish of Estrada): 1811.—Letters to the Editor of the Tyne Mercury, on the Annual Subscription to the Sons of the Clergy: London 1811.—Cobbett and the Reformers Impartially Examined: 1813.—Letters to the Editor of the Tyne Mercury.—

*his va
public
(1814)
enumer*

Besides these works Mr. Burdon contributed to the periodical and diurnal press.—This is a long list of writings by one man who did not begin the office of author very early in life and died prematurely.

*His Love
of Truth
Justice
&c.*

*on his
life of
Bonaparte*

Yet it is not the extent and variety of his compositions that attract the attention; but the liberality, the benevolence, and the love of truth, which pervade them. Justice was so peculiarly his character, that self-love—the predominant love of an author for his opinions—had no hold on him. He had originally conceived extravagant notions of the “unlimited improveability of our nature,” which he renounced. He had repeatedly eulogized Bonaparte; yet in the Preface to the second edition, 1804, of his *Life of that extraordinary person*, he acknowledged himself “to have been blinded by the splendid blaze of his success, his exploits, and his promises. But now, that time and the possession of power have unmasked him, and reflection has taken place of sudden surprise, I am no longer an enthusiast in his praise, but view him as he deserves to be viewed by every lover of liberty and of human nature,” &c. This freedom to retract declarations which he considered erroneous has been reputed by some as vacillating:—this was not his temper; he was sufficiently decisive: but some regard Bonaparte as a first love, whom they have taken *for better for worse*, without considering that even this conjugal contract has its limits. Mr. Burdon’s fault was not, that he abandoned Bonaparte, but that he was too long beguiled by his artifices.

*publication
against
his author*

The author of this memoir has also heard of a small

pamphlet circulated in the North offensive to the purity of Mr. Burdon's principles. This is a pure lie, as it wants the semblance of truth. Mr. Burdon had written some severe strictures on the meanness of annually begging for the Clergy of Durham, a body of men who share among themselves nearly two hundred thousand pounds a year of the public bounty. The justness of this reproach was manifest; and as he could not be answered, even sophistically, he was abused. His motives for exposing their indecorous solicitations also were above all insinuation; for had he consented to receive orders, he would long before that time have obtained a College living of a thousand pounds annual revenue.

*in consequence
of his severe
strictures
upon the
Clergy
of Durham*

His independence

Mr. Burdon's justice is obvious in all his works. He states either side of a question, (even when he is most decidedly in favour of one of them,) with the utmost fairness. In his pamphlet on the Privileges of the House of Commons, (in which he shows he would have succeeded as a lawyer if he were not as averse to the bar as the church,) this equity is remarked by a writer in the Monthly Review, for "though an ardent opponent of the privilege lately exercised by the House of Commons," "his plain dealing will indeed by some be deemed excessive; for he accuses Mr. Hatsell and Sir Francis Burdett of misstating and misrepresenting the precedent established in Thorp's case," &c. vol. lxiii. page 216.

His impartiality

Next to justice, Mr. Burdon was distinguished for his love of liberty. Nor was this confined to any particular pursuit, nor to his country, nor to Europe—it

*His Love
of Liberty*

was universal. He was anxious for Old Spain and for her American colonies. His house also was a refuge for many Spanish patriots: the writer has heard him mention his intimacy with twenty-three individuals of that nation, all of whom without exception he spoke of as men of considerable talents and superior probity.

His benevolence &c. His benevolence and generosity were not confined to persons suffering in a great cause. To want, was to him a sufficient recommendation; and if in the person distressed he discovered abilities, he patronized him beyond his merits. The circumstances attending two individuals, who ill-requited his affection and generosity, might be omitted in regard to his discernment and the credit of human nature. But the good of all is the relation of truth. I may observe that in one of the instances alluded to, the young man was introduced to him by a work called "The Saunterer." He was friendless, and in distress. Mr. Burdon superintended his final education, entered him at Cambridge, and maintained him at the University. With his good fortune, he disgusted by his vanity all to whom he was introduced—became prodigal—incurred considerable debts—sunk into the vilest debauchery—and frequently reviled his benefactor in the Satirist. Of Mr. Burdon's other failure of a similar kind, it is so hideous, that it is unique for romantic attachment on one side and ingratitude on the other.

His style. In giving an account of an author it is usual to scan his style, and afford an estimate of his learning and capacity. As a writer, the reader may decide for him-

self. The basis of Mr. Burdon's philosophy, and that to which he directed all his thoughts, was utility. In what degree he succeeded in this respect must also be submitted to the sagacity of the reader. But it may be observed that *THE MATERIALS FOR THINKING*, from 1803 to 1819 passed through five editions—a succession, considering the nature of the work, seldom exceeded in rapidity; and particularly as it was not cherished by any friendly reviewer, nor announced with the usual titular appendages, but simply by William Burdon.

*utilitarian
the basis
of all
medicine*

Mr. Burdon's habits were retired. He was averse to general intercourse and worldly matters;—perhaps his unaptness for business was increased by the unkind efforts of his father to force his disposition; as there can be no doubt but his literary propensities were improved by the Rev. Hugh Moises, master of the grammar-school at Newcastle upon Tyne, of whom he always spoke with affection and respect.

*His habits
retired*

He was middle-sized, slender, yet well-knit and agile. His health was precarious, probably in consequence of a too sedentary life; yet his complaint did not materially obstruct his studies. He composed the *Life of Bonaparte* during a severe jaundice, yet it betrays no symptoms of the lassitude which attends that disease.

*His person
& health*

For many years a small swelling affected his thigh; it was only perceivable when pressed, and produced no inconvenience. In July 1817 it became troublesome and increased in size; in a short time the pain was unremitting and intense. Mr. Burdon was confined

*the cause
of his trouble*

to his bed, yet he persisted to prepare the present edition of "Materials for Thinking" for the press. Continuing to grow worse, and no hope from the medical assistance afforded in the country, he arose from his bed, emaciated and in agony, to perform a journey from Northumberland to London. The first surgeons of the capital were successively employed—all their remedies were ineffectual. The complaint being assuredly an ossification, amputation was determined on. Mr. Burdon hailed the decision. During the operation, which was skilfully performed, Mr. Burdon neither winced nor lamented—his pulse was unvaried. The thigh was amputated close to the trunk of the body. Though the wound healed slowly, and he was never free from pains, sanguine hopes were entertained of his recovery. In two months he came down stairs; he took air in the carriage, and even moved about the streets, in the neighbourhood of Welbeck-street, by the assistance of a servant. All hopes were soon ended. About the middle of May he gradually relapsed; he found great difficulty of breathing, attended with spasms. On the 24th of May, being in imminent danger, he expressed an ardent wish to see a gentleman of his acquaintance: he came to Mr. Burdon at midnight, who expressed the utmost affection for him, adding, "They say I may live—I say I must die." Mr. Burdon did not wish to see his wife and children—"Oh, no," he answered, "it would be too distressing",—so tender was his nature. He expired the 30th of May 1818, possessing his intelligence unimpaired to the close of his existence.

*thigh
amputated*

*lived
May 1818.*

Such was William Burdon; an attentive husband, a fond father, an absolute friend. Deeply versed in the Greek and Latin classics, he spoke French fluently, and was largely acquainted with German, Spanish, and Italian literature. A politician without the taint of party,—an instructor who practised what he inculcated,—a philosopher who sought truth, who employed his unadulterated reason in its pursuit, and fearlessly published the result of his inquiries. He was liberal, rational, resolute, and consistent,—for as he lived he died.

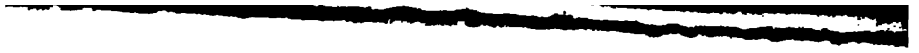
general character & acquirements
G. Elliot — ?



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MATERIALS
FOR
THINKING.

LIBERALITY OF SENTIMENT.

LIBERALITY of sentiment is the greatest ornament of man, it embellishes all his other good qualities, and makes them shine with double lustre, it softens all the harshness arising from difference of opinion, it lessens the frequency of private quarrels, and makes the Jew, the Christian, and the Infidel, live at peace with each other. This amiable quality, tho' occasionally possessed by the first teachers of Christianity, has, in very few instances, ever belonged to any description of Christians since their times, for sentiments of intolerance are early to

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ornam
of M*

Liberality of Sentiment

2

be found in the writings of the Fathers, and all established religions are essentially intolerant. The liberality of true philosophy is unrestrained by the narrow creed of opinions merely speculative, and estimates every man's merit by his conduct, considering the great end of philosophy to consist in utility. But all mankind are not philosophers, for with most men, violence is the test⁴ of sincerity, and to be liberal is but another name for being indifferent; such, however, have yet to learn, that sincerity in opinions is to be shewn only by actions, and that belief is a personal affair. What I should believe, no man has a right to dictate or enquire; what I do, concerns others only so far as it may affect their interest. To be liberal, is only a virtue, because the perversity of the world has sanctioned the contrary, it is strictly that which every man has a right to expect, because no one has a right to say to another, "You ought to believe what I believe;" for belief should proceed from conviction, and conviction is not at any man's command.

Liberality, tho' not inconsistent with a belief of our own, forbears to interfere with the faith or the hopes of another, and all attempts to dictate to others, are violations of that pure spirit of philosophy, whose only weapons of conver-

*Liberality
interferes
not with the
faith of
others—*

sion are advice and argument, whereas the instruments of persecution are various, keen, and cruel; and tho' (thanks to the temper of the times!) those coarse correctors of heresy, the gibbet and the stake, are now out of fashion, yet the ingenuity of power has invented other methods of enforcing silence or belief, not quite so effectual, but more painful to the mind of the sufferer. The force of parental authority, the power of situation, the influence of riches, on the hopes and expectations, the feelings and passions of men, have all been exerted to effect a similarity of belief, which is of little use either to the world or to individuals.

The generality of mankind are ignorant, ill-liberal, and little qualified to judge of speculative opinions; if any one thinks for himself, and ventures to speak his sentiments, they harshly and hastily condemn him, without being able to enter into his motives; they cry out, "heretic! infidel! atheist!" and treat him with every species of insult and contempt.

To quarrel with our friends for difference of opinion, is peevish and ridiculous; it is like a spoiled child, who, not being able to get every thing he wants, falls a crying in a pet. Why should any man dislike another merely because he thinks differently from him, for if his actions

Liberality of Sentiment

4

are just, kind, and honorable, of what consequence is it to the world, much less to any individual, from what motive they proceed? Some men do good because they feel a pleasure in it; others, because they conceive it to be the will of God; others, because they believe it to be conformable to the eternal rule of right and the moral nature of things, and if their actions neither disturb the peace of the world, nor interrupt the harmony of social intercourse, what right has any man to say, "You ought to think otherwise."

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Opinions are of consequence only as they lead to actions, and when actions are destructive of public or private peace, it is the right of society to protect the safety of individuals by laws and punishments. To encroach on the right of thinking, is to invade liberty in her inmost sanctuary, and to reduce the greatest part of mankind to the rank of *automata*, for if a man's actions are not the result of his conviction, he might as well never think at all, but act like a puppet at the will of his mover. The professed object of all compulsion is uniformity of sentiment, an object, no doubt, desirable in matters of consequence, yet experience proves, that all attempts to produce it by force destroy their own purpose, for when left to themselves,

men are generally more alike in their opinions, than when controled by others. Truth is uniform and consistent, but error is multifarious, and the child of constraint, and so natural is liberty to man, that the more he is dictated to, the more likely he is to do wrong. Tho' some men tell us, that variety is desirable in all things, yet it is not to be denied, that, in things of importance the greatest similarity of opinion, consistent with liberty, is to be wished for, but in things that are indifferent, the greatest variety produces the greatest pleasure. Liberality, therefore, which leaves every man to think and act as he pleases, is the best remedy for difference of opinion, and the surest promoter of harmony among all parties. The experience of the world sufficiently proves, that there are hardly opinions in themselves destructive of the peace of society; it is not opinions which do harm, but the opposition to them. Many errors, which would have vanished before time and reason, have grown strong and vigorous by being encountered, and the very force by which they were opposed, has destroyed many thousand lives, and left the opinions which it meant to root out, confirmed and strengthened.

Liberality of sentiment is shewn not only in religious and political differences, but consists

*Liberal
of Sent.
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of others*

Liberality of Sentiments

6.

also in a benevolent attention to the failings and ignorance of our fellow-creatures in all ranks and stations. A man of true liberality never judges harshly of the conduct of others, he makes allowance for the defects of education and the errors of judgment, he estimates with impartiality the opportunities and advantages which those who do wrong, have had of knowing better, and whenever he can put a favourable construction on the conduct of any human being, he never imputes it to a bad motive, but at most to a false conception of things.

*The Liberal
advises, but
not dictate*

A liberal man will advise, but he will never dictate, because he desires that every man should be allowed the free exercise of his judgment in things which concern his happiness, and where it is necessary to resent an injury, he will do it more as a painful duty, than a pleasure, and without insult, violence, or malice, so that the person corrected, if he has any feeling, will be more hurt by such generosity, than he could have been gratified by his own ill-nature. To love those that hate us, tho' a precept of religion, is beyond the reach of our nature; the utmost that can be expected, is forbearance from injury. ⁶

*Liberality
the offspring
of Intelligence*

Liberality is a god-like virtue,⁷ for it arises only from superior intelligence. Ignorance and

illiberality are always found together. Whatever be his rank, profession, or pursuits, a liberal man will treat those of others with respect, at least where he differs, he will forbear to insult or injure,⁸ for even in politics and religion, which divide men the most in their opinions, it is possible to differ materially, and yet to be gentle and tolerant; to seek to convert, without dictating, and to give advice without offence.⁹ Liberality of sentiment¹⁰ gives an amiable cast to all our words and actions, and distinguishes one man from another; more than any other quality, for it is more extensive in its operation. Other virtues can only be exercised at particular times, and towards particular persons, but liberality is perpetually requisite. It is called for in judging and in acting, in council, in debate, in the senate, the pulpit, and the bar; it is shewn towards our friends and our enemies; to the wicked, the ignorant, and the foolish, the learned, and the gay; to all ages, sexes, and complexions; and even the virtuous are not above its beneficence, for it palliates their indiscretions, and prevents their good from being evil spoken of; it endeavours to make virtue more amiable, and to soften the deformity of vice; it pardons the errors of youth, and pities the vanity of beauty; and

Liberality of Sentiments

8

wherever it is possible to extenuate the faults and failings of our frail nature, it covers with a veil of kindness what cannot be totally concealed. The vices of the heart are alone beyond its gentle influence, and can never be touched by its power; they are hard, obdurate, and inflexible, and yield neither to mildness nor generosity: they must be treated as they treat others, for liberality is lost upon them. Avarice, meanness, selfishness, cruelty, and dishonesty, deserve no quarter, and he that is not their enemy, is an enemy to the world, for they desire no friends, and are at open hostility with every thing noble, generous, or beneficent; severity towards such enemies, is not only justifiable, but requisite.

*Prejudice
occasions
liberality*

So great is the weakness of human nature, and such is the force of prejudice, that there are men who are liberal in some things and not in others. Where the passions are strongly excited, men, the most liberal in other respects, suffer themselves to be led away without examination, and, from the implicit faith which they attach to certain opinions, think themselves justified in reprobating all those who differ from them, and, contrary to the mildness of their nature, use a degree of severity when they speak of such differences, which nothing

but the importance of the subject could produce or palliate.

The good effects of liberal sentiments can never be sufficiently felt and understood, till they are contrasted with those of an opposite quality, for such is the constitution both of the natural and moral world, that virtue and beauty derive all their lustre from their opposites.

*Good
never
ackno*

Illiberality is generally connected with the worst of our passions, and he whose mind is engrossed by any one of these, has no consideration for the feelings or the comfort of those who surround him. Ambition, envy, pride, malice, hatred, jealousy, revenge, and avarice, are passions which endure no rivals; every thing must yield to their gratification, or be sacrificed to their power; the gentle voice of moderation and reason is never heard in their presence; a benevolent feeling for the wants, ignorance, and desires of other people, is never experienced for a moment, and he who dares in any instance to oppose their power, will feel whether he deserves it or not; the violence with which they bear down all before them, right or wrong. Liberality stops to examine the true state of things, and mildly interprets the motives of others; but illiberality never deigns to reflect any further, than that

*Illibe
assoc
the worst*

Liberality of Sentiments

10

such and such things are contrary to her opinion or interest. Illiberality is a lesser sort of tyranny, for the illiberal man wishes all people to think as he does, even in trifles, and where he has power, will compel them to do so. If he is a father, he will esteem his children only as they accord with his own sentiments, or cease to oppose them; he will pay no attention to their feelings, pleasures, or sentiments, if they differ from his own, and will estimate all their merit by its conformity to his own standard.

*Illiberality
is confined
- any par-
ticular station*

Illiberality of sentiment is not limited to any rank or station, for the great are often more illiberal than their inferiors, and there is no species of illiberality more disgusting than that of people who live in what they please to call the world; they consider every man who is not of their own set and circle, as nobody, or one whom nobody knows. Whatever be his talents, virtues, and acquirements, like good works without faith, they are counted dead, if he has not a knowledge of what is called the world; that is to say, an acquaintance with a certain rank of people, and the places of a fashionable resort; and this contempt for the vulgar, as they are called, is now considered as the test of good breeding among people in

higher life. Formerly, a general civility to all ranks was the mark of polished manners; but now it is enough to be well received by a certain set, and the rest of the world are considered as heathens and barbarians. In the choice of his society, every man, no doubt, has a right to exercise his own discretion, and to consult his own pleasure, but those who appear in public places, where there must be a mixture of ranks, with some small shades of difference, are certainly expected to treat all persons, in whom there is nothing peculiarly disgusting, with liberality and respect, and not to confine their civility to those only with whom they are particularly acquainted, which is, in fact, to say, "You are not good enough to speak to us, therefore keep your distance." Such a want of liberality tends to make the great odious, and to lessen the veneration for superior rank, which can only be preserved by superior good manners and affability.

The most common and the most pardonable *The most general of illiberal* species of illiberality, is that which measures other people's ideas of happiness by our own; it is narrow minded, but it is natural, for self is the first thing with every man, and what makes him happy he easily thinks must make others so. Some men consider riches essential to hap-

Liberality of Sentiments

12.

piness, others believe a certain rank or station in life indispensable to comfort, and think the slightest variation from it must be misery. How often have I heard a young man or a woman, who has married a few degrees below that which they were brought up in, reprobated and pitied. "Oh, poor thing!" says some good-natured old lady, who never was in a house worse than her own, and has all the comfort that money can procure her, without exertion or trouble, "O, how I pity her! however, she has no one to blame, it is all her own fault," when perhaps the poor creature is far happier than those who insult her with their pity. Tho' not rich, she may be contented, and if her enjoyments are not costly, they may be refined, simple, and elegant. To let people be happy in their own way, is a mark of true liberality, and if they are not happy, to endeavour to make them so, is kindness and benevolence.

*Liberality
of rigid
women
rueful, and
benign*

No species of illiberality is more cruel in its nature, and more pernicious in its effects, than that which arises from the rigid virtue of women, when exercised towards the failings and errors of their own sex, for tho' the modesty and purity of the female character cannot be too scrupulously guarded, it is by no means requisite for that end, that even the utmost cri-

minality which the law allows, should be visited with perpetual punishment by the virtuous part of female society, when it is once atoned for by matrimony and subsequent good conduct. A street walker may become a virtuous woman, and I have no doubt which deserves the more severe condemnation; the woman who has sinned against chastity, and atoned for her fault; or the woman who refuses to forgive her; the former has perhaps both feeling and passion to plead in her defence, the latter can be actuated only by a bad heart, and she who refuses to forgive, cannot hope to be forgiven. To associate with women who live in open defiance of decency, is to break down all the fences of female virtue and decorum, but when repentance and amendment have in some measure atoned for past offences, it is a crime on the part of the virtuous to be rigidly severe, and to exclude the reformed from their society. Some actions, which are harshly called sins, will admit of much extenuation, and there are circumstances under which even adultery ceases to be a crime."

A liberal, candid, and ingenuous man, with a moderate share of talents, who has any weight in society by his rank or fortune, is of much more use in his generation than the greatest

*The Liberator
of the g
use to*

Liberality of Sentiments

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statesman or warrior that ever existed; for good men are much more wanted in the world than great ones. It is sufficient for one man in ten million to be a great man; but one in a thousand is too few to be good.

*Learned
illiberality*

The illiberality⁴ of learned men is not less frequent, nor less disgusting than that of others, yet certainly more excusable, for nothing has a greater tendency to make men think well of themselves, than the possession of superior knowledge; it is natural that those who have in general fewer opportunities of comparing their talents and acquirements with the rest of mankind than others have, should be apt to estimate them at ~~too~~ great a price, and depreciate¹² the merits of others. Nothing tends to soften the violence of prejudice so much as an extensive acquaintance with mankind in all ranks and degrees; yet it is not altogether wonderful (tho' certainly not defensible), that they, who after the most extended knowledge of the world, feel their own superiority, and see it confessed by others, should sometimes be arrogant¹³ or contemptuous towards their inferiors.

*Erroneous
idea of
a similarity
of opinion*

Similarity of opinion is often mistaken for liberality of sentiment, and we are apt to conclude, that they who think as we do, think liberally; yet this mistake does infinite harm,

¹² *Necesse est enim sibi nimium tribui
qui se nemine comparat. —*

for it deceives us with the idea of acting with propriety, while we are doing exactly the reverse. The dissenter thinks every churchman must be illiberal, while those of his own persuasion he considers as men of enlarged sentiments. Liberality, however, does not consist in a man's own opinions, but in the tenderness and respect which he shews to those who differ from him; it is not what we think or believe, but what we think of others, that makes us deserve the name of liberal; for tho' freedom from prejudice is one part of liberality, yet to respect the prejudices of others is a greater, and it is certainly that part which most contributes to the peace, comfort, and pleasure of society.

We are apt, by a very common mistake, to confound indifference with liberality, and a man who has no opinions of his own, is often said to be liberal to those of others—a degree of praise to which he has properly no claim, for the most liberal men are generally the most tenacious and best convinced of their own opinions, and as they feel how much it cost them to arrive at conviction, they pardon with more ease the mistakes of others. There are some men who have never given themselves the trouble to think much on any subject, yet

Indiffer-
often c
-founder
liberals

Liberality of Sentiments

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if they interfere not with other people's opinions, pass in the world for very liberal, good sort of men, and are never troubled with doubts or difficulties; they look steadily to their interest, and generally succeed in obtaining respect, consideration, and money.

*Liberality of
sentiments
consistent
with every
religious
rule*

Liberality of sentiment is scarcely consistent with any establishment of religion, for the fundamental article of them all is, the belief of their own superior excellence; yet it is not on this account alone that they are illiberal, (for this belief, in philosophy, is thoroughly consistent with the fullest indulgence to others) but in those establishments which are well endowed, the riches of the superior clergy induce them to entertain a mean opinion of those who dissent from the faith of the church; for the debasing effect of interest on the human mind is such, that we generally despise those who are superior to its temptations. The dissenter is not so much laughed at by the haughty churchman on account of his difference of opinion, as for his tattered coat and humble dwelling; for the patience with which he submits to the frowns of fortune, while he sees others enjoying her smiles; such is the illiberality with which delicacy of conscience is regarded by the degraded votaries of interest and pre-

ferment. The intolerant and illiberal spirit of the Romish church is now almost extinct, adversity has humbled her, and taught her forbearance and tenderness for the belief of others; she is now content to enjoy her own in quiet, without insisting upon its being received by all the rest of mankind, on pain of being condemned to eternal punishment. The protestant establishment seems to take place of her ancient rival, in sentiments of intolerance, but the time is fast approaching, when the liberality of true philosophy will teach her moderation and forbearance; and when all the persecuting statutes which she caused to be enacted will be erased from our civil code, and dissenters of all sorts will enjoy the utmost freedom of thought and expression. The church herself will, in time, give way to the progress of information, and even now her boasted and pre-eminent utility can no longer be maintained, when it is acknowledged that two-thirds of the nation are dissenters. There will soon be neither dissenters nor churchmen, but all men will be of one religion, the religion of reason, or true self-interest well understood.

Liberality of sentiment is the result of the free exercise of our reason, for the more this faculty is cultivated, the more ready we are to

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make allowance for the errors and excesses of our fellow-creatures, nor is there any danger to be apprehended from its most unlimited exercise; it may endanger many establishments which were formed in ages of ignorance, but it can never injure the happiness of society; it may oppose our prejudices, but it can never deprive us of any thing truly valuable; because it tends to the highest improvement of our nature. The love of liberty and the love of power are so nearly allied, that in some minds it is almost impossible to separate them, hence it is commonly said that a republican is always a tyrant; but a man of just and liberal mind will be as much averse to tyrannize over others as he will be unwilling to let others tyrannize over him; nevertheless, he will take care to maintain all the authority he has a right to, in his paternal and civil relations.

*mark of a
liberal mind*

To bear to hear the truth, either of ourselves or of our friends, is the mark of a liberal and cultivated mind. In every human being there is a mixture of good and evil in different proportions, and therefore to expect praise unalloyed, for the whole or any part of our conduct, is narrow minded and unmanly; for so long as men continue to have different habits and pursuits, they will view the same actions in

different lights, and praise or censure accordingly. A liberal man will make allowance for this difference of opinion, and be content with the praises of those whom he wished to please. Such a man is impartial in all his sentiments, and never suffers his judgment to be directed by narrow or private motives, but shews an equal tenderness for the failings of one man as of another, and considers, that however ridiculous any man's sentiments or conduct may appear, yet that they are the result of his impressions, and consequently cannot be altered but by contrary impressions, and, therefore, tho' he may wish to reason or laugh him out of his follies, he will forbear to insult or injure. A liberal man will never be a party man, nor will he ever believe or reject any opinions from private, interested, or personal attachments; he will never be hasty to believe evil reports, even of his enemies, for as he will always be desirous to act from a knowledge of the truth and the actual state of things, he will never hastily give credit to what may be false, for any thing he knows to the contrary. Were this disposition more general, we should seldom see private quarrels either long or violent, for what is it that gives importance to trifles in all such disputes, but the readiness with which peo-

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ple tell and believe all they hear, and the eagerness with which they listen to any ill-natured story, to the prejudice of another. The excess of liberality is illiberal when it forbids us to censure with just warmth and indignation, the excesses of vice or meanness.

*+ biased
Local
national
tach.??* A liberal man will never suffer his sentiments to be biassed by national or local attachments, nor even by those of kindness or friendship, but will be as ready to reprove the faults of his countrymen, or friends, as those of any other individuals, and this he may do without any breach of affection or friendship, for neither of these requires us to surrender the free use of our opinion. It is only men of weak and narrow minds, who conceive themselves bound to defend their friends on all occasions, and at all hazards.

*national
ejudices
liberal* There is no species of illiberality more strikingly offensive, than that which gives an unjust preference to our own country, or to past times. The Greeks called all nations barbarians but themselves, and there are few modern nations who do not think their own country superior to any other. To love the place and the people where we have been born and educated, is consistent with the natural effect of early impressions, and if those im-

pressions have been pleasant, it is impossible to do otherwise, but to give them upon all occasions, and at all times such a preference to others, as to think nothing excellent which is not in some measure connected with them, either by nature or resemblance, shews a want of reflection, or a degree of obstinacy, totally inconsistent either with true philosophy or manly liberality. The privilege of age, or the pity due to those who have lost the friends and companions of their youth, may induce us to pardon the talkative, overbearing partiality of those who think nothing excellent but in past times, and despise the present generation compared with those who have lived before us; but there is little excuse for those who praise the times which they know only by report, and seem to exalt the ancients merely to depress the moderns.¹⁶ It matters not to me what is a man's country, his religion or his opinions.—Is he an honest man, is he a good man, is he a great man, is he a liberal man, is he a learned man, is he a pleasant man? Is he all or any one of these, and I will regard him in proportion to his merits, and never enquire whence he comes, what he believes, nor who are his relations.—But if he is dishonest, illiberal, proud, mean,

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servile, or unjust, I will spurn him and despise him, tho' he were descended from kings, or distinguished by wealth and fashion.

*Liberality
in money*

To be liberal in money, deserves little praise compared with liberality of sentiment; the one frequently arises from ostentation and vanity, the other can only be the result of a cultivated mind, or a generous heart, for it respects the feelings, prejudices, and sufferings of others; it pays many debts which are not strictly obligations of justice; it supplies the defects of law, and, where all other motives cease to operate, liberality enjoins purity in our own conduct, and that candid interpretation of other men's, which, more than all our virtues, tends to sweeten and adorn society. A liberal man will be no less tardy to condemn, than others are to acquit; he will, therefore, never pass a censure on whole bodies of men for the faults of a few, or even of many individuals, but will estimate every man by his own merits, and not by those of his countrymen or acquaintance. In relieving the poor, he will consider their mental as well as their bodily wants, and if he sometimes meets with ingratitude, greediness, or cunning, will impute them to poverty and ignorance, and when he considers how little the

best education does for the rich, he will not wonder that the poor, who have none, can do so little for themselves in subduing their evil propensities; he will remember that almsgiving is not the whole of charity, but that the more estimable parts are moderation and forbearance. A liberal man will always be ready to receive advice, when well intended,¹⁷ and suppose others to act from good motives, till he knows to the contrary; for tho', in the rude commerce of the world, he must meet with many who have no regard for any thing but their own sordid interest, he will not, on that account, be more inclined to suspicion, but forbear to think ^{of} men dishonest, till he finds out their treachery; thus he will preserve his own happiness, and constantly avoid unjustly injuring the characters of others; for he who is prone to suspicion must always be unhappy, and frequently unjust. The illiberal man, on the contrary, with a dull head and a cold heart, mistrusts all around him, and not being able to distinguish the true characters of men, thinks all alike dishonest; suspicion serves him in the place of wisdom, and not knowing whom to trust, he trusts no one.

*chief
spinous
liberality*

The greatest happiness arising from liberality of sentiment is, that it excludes all the mean and

17. *modesti hominis est a
quocunque libenter admoneri*

Liberality of Sentiment

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contemptible passions, for it is impossible that a man who fully exercises his reason, should be subject to the low suggestions of envy, jealousy, or malice, either in public or private. To enter into a noble competition with our rivals, either in fame or honor, is worthy of a great and liberal mind; to be envious of the superiority of others, is weak, illiberal, and contemptible. Emulation creates exertion and enterprize, but envy and jealousy can arise only from conscious weakness or timid submission; he who emulates, is generous; he who envies, is mean and wicked; to admire a rival, is magnanimous, to hate him, is cruel and contemptible. To detract from the merits of our adversaries, or to refuse them their due share of praise, is the mark of a weak, narrow, and disingenuous mind; it shews a want both of intellect and integrity. To refuse to acknowledge the kindnesses ¹⁹ we have at any time received, is not less illiberal and pitiful²⁰—it is a false pride and a real meanness. Few men keep a strict account of what they have gained solely by their own exertions, and few for what they are indebted to others—yet justice, as well as liberality, requires that this account should be fairly balanced. There is more true dignity of mind in acknowledging an obligation, than in con-

[19] *Fortasse pudoris est dissimulare
per quos profeceris, sed tamen
ingrati pudoris est illiberatis*

[20] *Qui invidet minor est.*

ferring it; and yet the generality of men like better to confer kindnesses than to receive them, for the one gives an idea of superiority, the other of inferiority. There are some men who will sooner forgive an injury than an obligation.

instance Nothing tends more to enlighten mankind, and to render the intercourse among them free and unrestrained, than that ingenuous openness which banishes all useless mystery, secrecy, and reserve. Every profession has its secrets, and some which cannot be divulged; but all attempts to encrease them, and to keep up any disguise, where none is requisite, are mean and illiberal, and savour more of the narrow spirit of a sect than the enlightened sentiments of a liberal philosophy. Secrecy is the paltry resource of a narrow mind to give itself consequence, and it generally happens, that where much is pretended, there is little to conceal, for men of noble minds²¹ are open and unreserved.

Govt *to* *make* *really* The natural propensity of mankind to prefer themselves on all occasions, and those perverse institutions of society which favor too much the accumulation of wealth and power, are perpetually counteracting the efforts of enlightened minds to propagate liberal sentiments,

21 La vrai noblesse aime à se montrer partout et tout entière; il n'y a que les âmes basses ou fausses qui croient avoir besoin de se cacher.

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and it is only by the force of strong and repeated impressions that they can be preserved. Mankind are engaged in a perpetual struggle with each other, and ever must be, from the nature of things, as will be shewn hereafter, and therefore the utmost that can be expected from the best moral principles and advice, is to diminish the sum of evil by the introduction of an opposite good, for evil can never be wholly eradicated from the system. To acquire sentiments of liberality, is not the work of a day, nor a month, but of years; they are generally the fruit of early instruction, for those opinions which we acquire in our youth make the deepest impression, and are longest retained. It is of great consequence, therefore, that the passions and opinions of young people should be early submitted to the discipline of reason, that they should be early taught to see things in their true light, and attach no exclusive merit to any sectarian principles of religion; for nothing tends so much to inflame the worst of our passions, and narrow the greatest minds, as religious bigotry.²² The strongest argument for religious liberality, and mutual forbearance, is the great diversity of religions throughout the world, and the confidence with which they are believed by their different adherents.

| measuring all reason by our own is the commonest, & the greatest weakness; it is an encroachment on the common rights of mankind -

They cannot all be true; and as they all exclude each other from the favor of heaven, it is much more reasonable to suppose that they are all false; to believe otherwise is to make God the author of injustice and cruelty, by condemning men to eternal punishment for disbelief in what, from their education and prejudices, they have never had the means of knowing. To suppose that he regards them all with an equal eye of benevolence, as so many different attempts to obtain his favor, is liberal and consistent, and in this light they are all from him; but to suppose that he has revealed one, and punishes all who believe the rest, is to make him partial, cruel, and unjust. Let every man, who believes in a divine Creator, endeavour to please him, by loving his fellow-creatures, and whatever be his religion, whether Deism, Mahometanism, or Christianity, it will do no harm, and may do good; but whoever persecutes, hates, or oppresses those of different opinions from his own, his religion cannot be from heaven, because it disturbs the peace of society. To teach young people, that no religion which promotes the happiness of man can be contrary to the will of what is called God, is to give them a lesson of liberality which will do them more good than volumes of divinity; and

D 2

(13) Let it be early inculcated into both sexes, that men are not accountable for their opinions more than their faces.
(Haines)

Liberality of Sentiments

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whatever religion cannot stand that test, may safely be pronounced false, for so extensive is the right to the freedom of religious worship, that even toleration itself is intolerance. So much for youth. To those who are more advanced in life, and have formed opinions and prejudices unfavourable to other people's belief, I should recommend the perusal of the most liberal writers. If they are churchmen, they should read the works of Hooker, Taylor, Mede, Locke, Hoadley, Middleton, and Shipley¹⁵; if they are dissenters, let them study¹⁶ Lardner, Watts, and Doddridge; and if they are infidels, let them read the last chapter of Volney's Ruins, and they will learn to limit their researches to the material world, to leave the world of spirits to more intelligent beings, and be satisfied that all religion consists in morality.¹⁷

HUMAN INCONSISTENCIES.

THE great moral maxim of self-knowledge ^{Self-knowledge} is of all others most difficult to be practised, ^{Edge the} for every man, in estimating his own character, ^{most hard} is so apt to be blinded by passion, partiality, ^{to acquire} and prejudice, that he rarely discovers those faults in himself which he sees so quickly in another; no man is alone equal to this arduous task, and even to derive advantage from the advice of others, requires a previous state of mind, cleared from the mists of passion and the blindness of self-love. It is a great art to think ourselves in the wrong; to the want of this disposition we must attribute the inefficacy of the best moral and religious writings to smooth the inequalities of human conduct, and to preserve the world from the rude collisions of passion and interest. Many men read, but few take to themselves what they think applies only to others; they acknowledge the

I am one of those who have as much pleasure in being convinced, as in convincing; for I think it the greatest good a man can obtain, to be freed from error - (Socrates)

Human Inconsistencies

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excellence of the advice, but they prevent its efficacy, either by their refusal or neglect to apply to their own conduct; few men intentionally correct their errors, but imperceptibly receive the impression of those with whom they converse; so that the effects of moral instruction are not to be perceived in individuals, but in the general progress of improvement from one age to another.

*General
inconsistency
every
human
character.*

In examining the various features of the human character, there is none more striking than the inconsistency which in some degree marks the conduct and opinions of every man living. There is no man whose character is consistent throughout; none are wholly good or wholly bad; some are betrayed into contradictions by passion and prejudice; others, by custom, interest, weakness, persuasion of friends, vanity, or ignorance; and in a world where so many objects pull different ways, it is impossible for any man to act at all times honestly and consistently. If we look back into the world for a century past, we shall find that a great change has been operated for the better, in many notions which concern the happiness of man; yet this change was scarcely perceived at the time, and can only be discovered by marking its effects at certain distances. The pro-

gress of human improvement is like the hour-hand of a clock ; we do not perceive it move, tho' we perceive that it has moved, and yet like the clock its progress is limited ; there is a point beyond which it cannot extend ; to that limit it has not yet arrived, when it has, it must be retrograde, for a certain portion of evil is requisite to keep down population to a level with the means of subsistence.

good
acts of
reason

The happy effect of reason, in regulating the ebullitions of the passions, may be easily perceived by coolly surveying the progress of society. When individuals govern a nation, without any control from the general sentiments of the public, their whole life and administration will present a series of inconsistencies. Such is the history of arbitrary monarchies. In proportion as public opinion becomes enlightened and refined, the conduct of governments, whether monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical, becomes regular and steady ; and tho' the force of time and prejudice sanctions many follies, yet they are not like those which are to be found in the infancy of the world when public and private reason were unformed. The inconsistencies which marked the great characters of former times, were those of passion and caprice, arising from the licence

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of arbitrary power, but as ambition is more under the restraint of regulated government, she is forced to submit to accomplish her purposes by various, and sometimes opposite, means, and to pretend at least in her most daring projects to consult the public good. The difference is striking, and shews an improvement in the state of society, which is yet, indeed, capable of being still further improved.

human inconsistencies
2 kinds;
private &
public.
of private. The inconsistencies of human opinions and conduct are of two sorts, those which are public, and those which mark the characters of individuals in private. The former of these arise from a defective knowledge of the principles of truth and justice, which are uniform and consistent; the latter from the defects of education and the strength of the passions, for people who are guided solely by their passions, or their feelings, must for ever be guilty of inconsistencies.

of public. The greatest inconsistency in public opinions which I mean to notice, is to be found in a generally received system of faith, which proclaims the mercy of the Deity, and the eternity of future punishments.³⁴ Another striking inconsistency in received opinions is, a belief in the foreknowledge of God and the freewill of man, a belief which arises from a desire to

reconcile a particular system of faith with the appearances of things. Not less inconsistent is the profession of christianity with the practice of war, yet we have seen these go hand in hand ever since the establishment of the church of Christ under Constanstine; nay, the sword has even been unsheathed in the name of christianity, an inconsistency so striking, as nothing but long experience could have compelled us to believe.--That men, forgetting their christian profession, and engrossed by the thoughts of ambition, should for a time have ceased to remember the meekness of their great Master, and plunged themselves and others into war, may perhaps, from the weakness of human nature, be palliated or excused; but that they should professedly draw the sword, for the sake of propagating and supporting a religion which refuses all such support, and appeals only to spiritual weapons, is an inconsistency which, however it may find an explanation in the perverseness of our nature, is certainly not very favorable to a belief in it's divine origin. The whole system of popery, and much of the protestant establishment, are utterly inconsistent with christianity, which they profess to believe, tho' they have been received and supported for many hundred

Human Inconsistencies

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years, and yet find some defenders; but the influence of both is on the decline, and the force of truth and consistency is daily prevailing against all their adversaries.

*Private, with
on Frased with
public character*

Another inconsistency in the human character, not less striking than any of the former, is the difference frequently to be found between the public and private characters of men; and this is only to be accounted for, by proving that many public establishments, being founded, and consequently administered, on principles of iniquity and injustice, require from individuals of the best private morality the sacrifice of their honour and consistency to promote their temporal interest. Hence it is, that men, who in their private capacity abhor every thing cruel, tyrannical, or dishonest, not only sanction, but take a part in any thing, however disgraceful, which can forward their schemes of interest or ambition. Have we not daily instances of men, who, tho' the best friends, fathers, and husbands, will yet sign or execute commands which destroy the peace and happiness of thousands; and tho' they turn with horror from an act of cruelty, or weep with sympathy over a tale of woe, yet as statesmen or soldiers, never hesitate to embrue their pen or their hands in the blood of innocent and un-

known victims. And what is their motive or excuse? They must do their duty. To what enormities and inconsistencies may not men be reconciled by custom and interest? The man who will one day stretch out his hand to give alms to a sturdy beggar, may perhaps the next draw his sword against the life of a fellow-creature who has never offended nor injured him; and yet he will do all this without thinking he acts unjustly or inconsistently; he has been taught to do both, and he never thinks he can be doing wrong; so difficult a thing is self-knowledge, and so little consistency is there in actions which are the result of custom rather than of reflection.

and among the clergy Another striking inconsistency, of considerable moment, deserves also to be noticed, it is that which exists between the precepts of the gospel and the lives of the clergy; they either cannot or will not see it themselves, but it is evident to all those who are not blinded by interest or prejudice. The life and the precepts of Jesus Christ inculcated the most rigid self-denial, the utmost contempt for those good things of the world, which belong to the body rather than the soul, the strongest abhorrence of wealth, power, and dignity; and yet his modern successors, the christian clergy,

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live in direct opposition to his example and his advice, pursuing all these vain delights with the utmost avidity, so that it is no uncommon thing to see them ambitious, haughty, and fond of power; seeking for temporal, as well as spiritual dignity; eager to amass wealth,³⁴ to aggrandize their families, and increase their influence; insolent to their inferiors, and servile to those above them; fond of pleasure, and delighting in external splendor; and yet, with all this, professing themselves the servants of a humble Master, and the preachers of his word. They preach, indeed, but they do not practice; they preach patience to those who are in poverty, resignation to those who are afflicted, and humility to those who are in no danger of pride; yet they are themselves examples to the contrary of all that they teach; they warn their congregations against false philosophy, but say nothing about false religion; they call other men atheists, and are atheists themselves, for if they do not deny their God, they disobey him; they are Epicureans in their own sense of the word, for their study is earthly enjoyment and sensual pleasure. Did they pocket the emoluments of their profession quietly, and say nothing about Jesus Christ and his religion;

did they enjoy themselves without preaching mortification to others, they might at least avoid the sin of inconsistency ; did they not call themselves the disciples of Jesus, they might pass for the disciples of Epicurus, and thus make their pleasure and their interest agree with each other ; but while they profess in words what they deny in their practice, and insult their Maker while they deceive the world, they cannot well avoid bringing themselves and their establishment into merited contempt. Another inconsistency of this reverend body, not less striking, nor more defensible than those already mentioned, is the violence with which they attack the practice of duelling and defend the practice of war, and both on the principles of christianity ; the reason of this is obvious ; war is sanctioned by the conduct and maxims of statesmen, to whom the clergy are now as servile in their submission, as they were formerly imperious in their commands. Duelling is merely a concern of individuals, unsupported by authority, and therefore unconnected with the temporal interest of the clergy ; but the same passions which occasion duelling, excite war, for war is generally the affair of a few ambitious men, who contrive to interest others in their quarrel ; it rarely happens that two na-

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tions unanimously and heartily quarrel with each other. Christianity, however, is equally averse to public and to private warfare, and therefore he that, speaking as a christian, expresses his abhorrence of the one, must, if he is consistent, do the same of the other, even in cases of self-defence. The greatest argument, both against war and duelling, on the principles of reason and morality, is the value of life; but this applies more strongly to the one than to the other, because the latter is generally a voluntary affair, while the former is a matter of compulsion. If the world were governed by reason, no man would think of taking away either his own life or that of another, but reason does not govern the world, and, therefore, men will most probably continue to destroy each other, whenever they are impelled to it, by their passion or their interest.

consistency
Pub Lic
men

The inconsistencies in the conduct of public men have had the most pernicious effect on the interests of society, they have lessened that confidence in professions of patriotism which gave the people in all nations a security for their rights, have rendered them indifferent to all forms of government, and thus prepared them to submit to any; they have degraded the laudable competition for public confidence,

into a mere contest for power; they have debauched the virgin integrity of young politicians, have led them to suspect that liberty and virtue are but names, and taught them to believe that they have nothing to regard in life but their own sordid interest.

The man who at one time defends the principles of liberty, and at another the conduct of despotism, who is the advocate of the same men and the same measures he once reprobated, who is wavering, irresolute, and unsteady, who approves one part of a system and condemns another, vibrating for ever between his duty and his interest, if he is not a very weak man, is certainly dishonest, and such a man can only redeem his character with the world by his talents; but if he has neither talents nor honesty, is completely contemptible, he forfeits all claims to esteem, and is condemned to perpetual insignificance.

To conform outwardly to what we inwardly despise, is a species of inconsistency of all others the least pardonable, because it shakes the very foundations of morality; and to be punctilious in forms of respect, where we neglect important attentions, is the mean disguise of a bad and depraved heart. No man who does not act upon principle can be consistent

Liberty & despotism cannot be supported by one character.

External conformity is not proper where the spirit exists internally & is believ-

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in his conduct; he will at one time be under the direction of interest, at another, of passion, at another, of prejudice, so that it will be impossible to say, in any given state of things, what will be his conduct; but he who is uniformly guided by honorable and independent principles, will, in all similar cases, act with uniform and steady integrity, so that even those who are personally unacquainted with him will be able to say how he will think and behave, in any particular case, either of public or of private importance.

*private
inconsistency* The inconsistencies of private conduct, tho' they sometimes deserve the reprehension of the moralist, are not always of an injurious tendency; they are not, like those in public life, always contrary to the principles of justice, and, as they are frequently innocent, become the subject of ridicule rather than of reproof; yet, since those of a more serious nature often disturb the peace of families, and interrupt the harmony of social intercourse, it becomes the duty of every man who feels himself interested in the general happiness of society, to correct, as far as it is in his power, these moral deviations, by shewing the source from whence they arise, and the remedies most likely to prevent their destructive tendency. To those who are

of opinion that the seeds of vice and evil are sown in our earliest years, and that our future conduct greatly depends on education, it will be evident, that so far as all inconsistencies of character arise from violent passions, which force us to act in contradiction to reason, the only means of preventing these inconsistencies is, to mitigate the force of the passions at an early period. To eradicate them entirely is inconsistent with the order of nature and therefore impossible, yet to reduce these discordant elements to a harmonious unison with each other, so that their dissonance may be no greater than such as gives a relish to the harmony of music, is an attempt which, tho' at the first may appear impracticable, is not on that account to be abandoned, and every effort towards such an end will doubtless decrease its difficulty. Let it not be objected to this attempt, that it will occasion a tiresome uniformity of character, and finally destroy all pleasure arising from that interesting variety which we at present experience in the different scenes of the moral world, and, by reducing men to one common standard, tend to repress all the energies arising from great talents, and all the striking contrasts which mark the difference of our dispositions. Whoever supposes any

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such consequence, must be ignorant of the true source of those pleasing varieties which human nature affords, and have dwelt with satisfaction only on those prominent and inconsistent oppositions which mark the worst of characters, and occasion surprize and disgust, rather than emotions of pleasure, arising from harmonious contrast. Whoever objected, to a fine piece of music, because the discords were not sufficiently striking? Whoever said of a fine painting, where the lights and shades were managed with the greatest dexterity, that they ought to be more strongly given?—No man of judgment but will say, that by these means the harmony of the whole would have been destroyed. The various characters in life may be compared to a fine picture, when by a due regulation of the passions, they form one harmonious whole; in each we experience all the pleasure arising from variety, without being hurt or offended by any harshness of contrast.

*f. the free
good-temper'd
though low
characters.* Among the many variable, inconsistent characters which appear in the world, there are few which meet with more friends, or whose failings are more readily excused, than the man who, tho' constantly the dupe of his passions, possesses many good qualities, and,

above all, what is called a good heart; which is no more than a certain generosity of temper, not easily moved by the grosser considerations of interest, with a certain degree of tenderness for the sufferings of others. A man of this character, tho' defective in all the relative duties of life, tho' grossly immoral and debauched, tho' negligent in the payment of his debts, and addicted to all the vices which can distress the feelings of a father, a mother, or a wife, yet, if he occasionally performs a few acts of generosity, and gives away his money with profusion and cheerfulness, such a man, by the courtesy of the world, is called an honest, good-humoured fellow, who is nobody's enemy but his own, and never did an ill-natured thing to any one. Such a man is generous, tho' he is unjust, he is often tender-hearted to the distressed, tho' he never hesitates to give pain to his nearest relations, by his vices and his follies; he lavishes thousands in the pursuit of his pleasures, and is inattentive to the wants of those who have suffered by his extravagance.—Tho' tender to the failings of others, and humane towards their distresses, when forced upon his notice, yet, to gratify his lust, he hesitates not to rob the virgin of her innocence, nor an aged parent of his only comfort and support; tho' com-

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passionate to the afflicted, and gentle to those who are not in his power, he is frequently boisterous and severe to his menials and dependents; tho' negligent of all the duties of religion, he sometimes complies with its forms, and tho' practically much worse than an atheist, he is often forward to express his horror at those who differ from the general and established faith. To what can we attribute the errors of such a man, but to the defects of education, which, having failed to correct the passions, has left him a prey to all their excesses. He has had, most likely, some examples of good before him, and from them he has derived the best part of his character, but these being insufficient to counteract the temptations to which he was exposed, have left him a compound of inconsistency, at variance with his own judgment, and with the principles of common honesty; for ever subject to a conflict of contending passions, which hurry him, without reflection or foresight, from one extreme to another.

Zealots

The inconsistencies which mark the character of zealots in religion, tho' not now so common as formerly, still deserve our reprobation and contempt. To be constant at church, and fervent in prayer, to be seeking after heavenly

joys and ghostly comforts, to be occupied with the things of the spirit, and appear to despise the things of the flesh, is certainly very inconsistent with an ardent pursuit of worldly enjoyments, of the pleasures of the table, or the search after wealth, yet we frequently see these opposite extremes united. From the church to the 'change was no uncommon transition, from the worship of God to that of Mammon; yet, as the external ceremonies of religion are less attended to than formerly, the daily mockery of public prayer is now commuted for the regular observance of Sunday, and on that day, it is not uncommon to see men who have devoted the whole week to the pursuits of ambition or avarice, express with apparent fervency their gratitude for prosperous wickedness, and thank God for having injured his creatures. Such are the inconsistencies to which the force of early impressions can reconcile us with ease and composure. To adhere with scrupulous attention to all the forms of religion, and yet be devoid of its spirit; to love God, and hate his creatures, is an inconsistency so common, as hardly to be considered a fault. In the time of Pope a fine lady³⁵ was as constant at her prayers as her diversions; but with the younger part of the female sex, the church

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was rather considered as a place to display their persons than their religion, and as the beaux of those days were outwardly religious, the belles went to church rather to meet their admirers, than to adore their Maker. The elder ladies, however, were religious from disappointment, and, after being slighted by man, transferred all their love to God; they fled to their prayers as they did to their *liqueurs* for a source of comfort, when all others failed them. But tho' the one warmed their heads, the other never touched their hearts, for if in youth they were merely thoughtless, in old age they became ill-natured through vexation and disgust, and as all religion could not counteract the effects of disappointment, they let piety and malevolence go hand in hand, and sometimes said their prayers backwards. To a disappointed old maid, no day in the prayer-book can be so delightful as Ash-Wednesday, when she has the permission of the church to utter imprecations on her enemies. Such characters, tho' less frequently to be met with than they were fifty years ago, are not yet extinct; their contrasts are perhaps not so striking (for the manners of the times have softened some of the harsher features), yet it is not even now uncommon to see the appearance of piety

connected with all that is uncharitable and malevolent. Such must ever be the case, when the forms of religion are substituted for its spirit, and parents are more anxious to teach their children to say their prayers by rote, and go to church as a custom, than to subdue their passions, and impress them with sound principles of morality.

The inconsistencies into which men are led by the profession of christianity, arise chiefly from the extreme purity of its principles, contrasted with the violence of our passions, which it is unequal wholly to subdue³⁶; from the neglect of the spirit of christianity, occasioned by a mistaken attachment to external forms; and from a desire, in many zealous christians, to consider their religion as something superior to the control and direction of reason. To these three causes we must attribute the inconsistencies of those who, having no design to deceive others, are deceived themselves, and never compare their own conduct with that standard by which they constantly profess to be directed. To what else is it owing, that we see so many political fanatics, who pray to God for success in war, without examining the justice of their cause, and thank him for victories in which thousands of innocent men have perished?

*of the profession
& the practice
of Christianity*

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Why do we so frequently see those who are wholesale dealers in human blood, and traffic in the miseries of mankind, who count on the success of a battle with the same coolness as an honest farmer on the event of his harvest, devout in their attendance on public prayer, and severe in their censures on those who neglect the same ceremonies? Why, but because these men have no religion in their hearts, and their respect for its forms is merely a prejudice.

*commerce
&
gaming*

The man, who having spent the week in all the legalized frauds of commerce, in over-reaching his competitors in trade, and rejoicing in the success of his schemes; and the man, who having been whole days and nights at a gaming table, with all his thoughts occupied on the means of beating his antagonist, and robbing him of his money, are not unfrequently seen at church on the Sunday, repeating, loudly and fervently, the tenth commandment, and the prayer which follows it; the first of which forbids us to covet other men's goods, and the other prays to God to write all his laws on our hearts.

*the
history
of christianity*

The mysteries of christianity, however inconsistent with reason, have been believed, and are believed in, by some of the most enlightened men which this country ever produced, men

who, by the superior exertion of their faculties, have explored the arcana of nature, and fathomed the depths of intellectual philosophy. To account for this inconsistency, we must suppose, that being early impressed with the idea of a divine revelation, they conceived it impious to doubt what was delivered to them from so high an authority, and submitted their reason to their faith.

Among all the inconsistencies of the human character, there is none more essentially injurious than that which regards the treatment of our children. To behave to them at one time with unjust severity, and at another with fond indulgence, produces in them the same capricious temper, and renders them uncertain how to conduct themselves in order to avoid displeasure or secure esteem, and, at length, they become so regardless of either, as inevitably of the lessen that respect for the parental character which is the only security for parental authority. By this means the firmest bond of society is loosened, and all the other social ties are no longer those of duty or affection, but merely of terror and constraint.

The effects of custom on the faculties of the mind are not less forcible than on those of the body; the weight we have been long accus-

*Inconsistent
treatment
of children*

of custom

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tomed to lift, at length becomes lighter, that is, we do not feel it so heavy. In like manner, the feelings and the passions to which we have been long subject, are less perceived than those to which we are not so much accustomed. Hence it is, that we are more ready to tax the vices and foibles of others than our own; this propensity has been observed by many moralists, who look impartially on the affairs of the world, surveying, as from an eminence, the motly crowd beneath. The scripture has commanded us to pluck the beam from our own eye, before we find fault with the mote in another's; and the most ancient of heathen fabulists has told us, that Jupiter has given every man two wallets, the one placed behind him, containing his own faults, and one before, filled with those of others. In this apologue there is much wisdom and knowledge of mankind, for when once the worst of our passions and foibles have become familiar to us, we lose all idea of their deformity, consider them only as an indispensable part of our character, and as natural to us as the form of our personal features; but when we perceive the same defects in others, we never see them with the partiality of self-love, nor the dimness of continual custom, they strike us with their natural deformity, and we blame with freedom

the negligence of those who have suffered them to arrive at such an enormous height,—we wonder that people have so little control over their passions, and say what a shocking thing it is that their education has been so much neglected, or that, when they came to be older, they did not see their faults. Tho' some men are honest enough to acknowledge their failings, yet the generality of the world are disposed to blame in others that which they are most prone to themselves. The merchant rails at his competitor for being fond of money. The gamester says, what an unhappy thing it is to be addicted to play, for it wastes both a man's time and his health. The pedant laughs at pedantry, and exclaims, "How ridiculous it is for a man to be fond of shewing his learning." The censorious old maid, after destroying the reputation of half her acquaintance, declares, she detests nothing so much as slander; and the antiquated prude thinks it mighty silly in young people to be formal and reserved.

Whether many inconsistencies in the natural and moral faculties of man, arise from the defect of his nature, or from want of sufficient improvement, cannot easily be determined; for instance, there are some men who have an excellent ear for music and none for reading, and

whether arising from defects of nature or cultivation

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others who read and recite with the utmost propriety, without having any idea of musical rhythm. Men who have shewn themselves the firmest opposers of tyranny, have, in their turn, become tyrants to those beneath them; of this there are two remarkable instances, one of which is furnished by history, and the other by the present times. Luther and Bonaparte were both of them champions of liberty, and, considering the difference of their power, resembled each other in the rigid violence with which they dictated to others who submitted to their authority. The causes of such inconsistency will be found in that love of power, and the tendency to abuse it, which are common to human nature, and which no art or philosophy can eradicate, tho' they may diminish its force.

*inconsistency
of authors*

Another inconsistency which has been often remarked and censured, is, the difference between an author's conduct and his writings; this, perhaps, admits of greater palliation than any of those already mentioned, for when a man sits down to write, with a view of instructing society, it is to be supposed that he will endeavour to see things in their best light, and elevate his ideas above the common conduct of the world, that he may hold up a pattern of excellence for general imitation, to improve and

enlighten those for whom it is intended; no wonder, therefore, if he should fall short of what he allows no one has ever yet attained. And if, in mixing with the tumult and confusion of the world, or even in the intercourse of private society, he should be found not always strictly to conform to the precepts he lays down in his writings, he may be pardoned for a few deviations, particularly when those who censure him are not the most correct in their conduct, nor refined in their ideas; but any gross violations of his own advice, any glaring contradictions to his own notions of right, will less deserve excuse, as it will naturally be expected, that the custom of reflecting coolly and at leisure, on the vices and follies of the world, should produce a considerable degree of deliberation and prudence in his own conduct, and render him not so liable to be hurried away by the temptation to which others, less accustomed to reflection, are continually exposed.—The remarks which have here been applied to authors, will serve with no less force for divines, as they also are responsible for the advice of which they are supposed to be the authors; yet I believe it will be found, that many of our best preachers are not remarkable for the general regularity and integrity of ^{their} ~~our~~ ³⁸ lives. The ex-

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istence of the slave trade among free and christian nations, is an inconsistency which can only be accounted for on this principle, that as neither reason nor scripture can wholly overcome the force of the passions, men must be compelled to be honest either by fear or interest.

Power Among all the passions which force men into inconsistency, the love of power, which is the ~~is~~ first, and the most common, impels them to the most violent extremes; it makes them cunning, boisterous, pliant, imperious, and humble; it prompts them to the most opposite schemes, and suggests the most contradictory methods of obtaining its purposes; it urged Richieu to the odious policy of suppressing the protestants in France, and of supporting them in Germany; in public and in private it has the same effect of making men too often forget both their duty and their interest.

The
Fame The love of fame is not a less dangerous passion, nor productive of fewer inconsistencies, for it seeks to gain its object by so many different means, that they must frequently be at variance with each other. To be the friend of liberty, and the friend of her persecutors; to be a bawler against corruption, and employ it in secret; to love equality, and to despise those

beneath him; to profess independence, and yet court the great; to love the species, and hate his rivals, are inconsistencies which may be found in the same man, without subjecting him to the charge of duplicity; for in such a man, the desire of being noticed, the force of early associations, and prejudices, may be so mixed and blended with principles which he has got by halves, and doctrines which he does not comprehend, as to make it doubtful whether he most deserves our pity or contempt.

To prefer the charge of inconsistency against him who changes his opinions gradually and soberly, under the force of that conviction which arises from deliberate examination and research, is neither liberal nor candid; but when we see a man fly from one extreme to the other either in his religious or political sentiments, we are justified in suspecting him to want either wisdom or honesty. All sudden changes of opinion or conduct, excite suspicion of weakness or criminality, for conviction is not the work of a day, but of years; particularly if a man is rewarded for his sentiments, either by preferment or praise, we have a right to suspect that his motives are not always justifiable; interest^{l^d} may have impelled him in the one case, and vanity in the other.

*Sudden
changes of
opinion
inconsistent*

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excellency
of
consistency

The moral beauty of consistency is not its only recommendation; in the ornaments of the person, and the operations of art, it is equally pleasing. A variety of colours is not more disgusting in our dress, than a heterogeneous mixture of parts in architecture, sculpture, music, poetry, gardening, and painting. Simplicity, uniformity, and consistency, are requisite to elegance and pleasure; whoever neglects these either in his moral or professional conduct, stands a great chance to be ridiculed if not despised; for he must be weak, ignorant, or dishonest.

a Remedy
for
inconsistency

The remedy for all these dangerous and unjustifiable irregularities of conduct remains now to be considered; and it is, in our own power; for, if we do not fail to exercise our reason, there is little doubt that it is sufficient to correct most of the evils and the vices of the world; but the difficulties which obstruct its cultivation and use, are so numerous and powerful, that it seems almost a hopeless undertaking to attempt to enforce the necessity of its early and constant operation. The whole system of education is so entirely calculated to cherish the existing prejudices of the world, both in public and private conduct, and to check the cultivation of reason beyond what is requisite to embrace

and defend the corruptions of society, that it may, at first sight, seem impossible to expect any further or greater improvement; yet the case is not so hopeless as some men imagine, for tho' reason never will, nor ever can be the sole guide of the world, it is possible that her influence may be much extended, and the state of mankind considerably improved.

To what extent the nature of man is capable of improvement, is a question which has not yet received its full discussion. One sect of philosophers has maintained that it is unlimited, and that man is capable of arriving not only at political but moral equality; that men may not only become equal among each other, but equal in themselves; that they may be void of passions, and even physical wants, and that in time they may become immortal, without changing their state. This is, to be sure, an effectual method of reconciling all inconsistencies, but it will probably never be attained, and posterity, instead of profiting by the theory of the philosopher, will smile at his perverse ingenuity. Without saying how far improvement may be extended, it is fairly allowable, from past experience, to affirm that man is a being capable of improvement to a certain extent, tho' not of unlimited excel-

The extent to which this is impossible

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lence, and that every age will lessen his inconsistencies, both public and private. When individuals can be brought to examine their own conduct more impartially, and tax their own actions with the same severity that they now do those of others, there can be no doubt, that many of the evils arising from defective information, and blind self-love, will be lessened; but without a great previous change in the state of society this can hardly be expected, and, considering the present state of things, this change may seem every day more hopeless. Before men can be rendered generally more pure and virtuous, the mode of education must be greatly altered; it must teach men to think rather than to repeat; to exercise the mind, more than the memory, and to reason before they act, either in a public or private station; the force of external temptations must be weakened, and men must be early taught to look into themselves, before they look into others. All this requires much time, much instruction, and much adversity to accomplish; for there can be no doubt that the wealth which is now so unequally divided, creates divisions, animosities, and struggles among men, which prevent them from looking into their own hearts, and keep them for ever intent

upon external objects, which engross all their thoughts, and divert them from that self-possession and recollection which are requisite for their acting justly, either to themselves or others. No sounder remedy can be found for inconsistency of character, than that constant examination of ourselves, which keeps us intent upon our mental and social improvement; nor can man ever attain to the excellence of his nature, and avoid the fickleness of vanity and ambition, without humbling himself in his own mind, and comparing his progress in virtue with his original ignorance.

Inconsistency arises almost wholly from the *Since Inconsistency* generally, and passions, and can, therefore, never wholly be *from the passions* removed. The present age has hardly much *it can never* to hope for, but improvement may be the lot *be wholly removed* of posterity; the succeeding generation may, perhaps, enjoy a purer state of society, and derive advantage from the lessons of experience; yet as there is a term beyond which human nature cannot advance, neither nations nor individuals can be completely wise, happy, and virtuous; there must and ever will be a mixture of good and bad in all men, and all nations; some will excel in one art or quality, and some in another, for if all were equally great and good, population would never be

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thinned by vice and misery, and the world could never support all the happy creatures it contained. It seems, however, not hazarding too much to say, that since the invention of printing, the world can never relapse into a state of barbarism, nor submit to the dominion of one man, or of one nation.

THE IMAGINATION.

THE imagination is the faculty from which, of all others, we derive the greatest pleasure, and perhaps the greatest pain; it is placed in the medium between reason and the senses, and they all, in different degrees, contribute to our enjoyment. The passions and feelings have their share in our composition, but reason is supreme above them all. Imagination is of two sorts; that which is exercised in the ordinary events of life, and relates to the past and the future, and that which has no concern with things present or to come, but exerts its power in regions of its own creation. By the force of imagination, we transport our minds to past scenes which we have never witnessed, and which now exist only in the pages of the historian or the annalist. We are present at the sedition of the Gracchi, or the murder of Cicero; we glow with fancied enthusiasm at

definition

Les plaisirs de l'imagination sont les seuls réels; les bonnes trop bornées de la réalité ne nous laissent pas le temps d'en jouir celles de l'imagination dépassent les mesures de nos desirs et ne s'arrêtent qu'avec eux -

The Imagination

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the bravery of Leonidas, the firmness of Regulus, or the self-devoting patriotism of Codrus, Mutius, or the Decii; we live over again the times that are past, and survey the history of the world in minature, by the wonderful faculty of conceiving that which is described, and transferring all our knowledge of the present to the imagination of past events. Reason is thus instructed by a power inferior to herself, and history lends aid to philosophy, by presenting subjects for meditation and improvement. By the power of memory, we recal the events of our own lives, but we have no power to do more. It is imagination alone which enables us to look back for a hundred or a thousand years, and gives us a world, "beyond the visible diurnal sphere;" to her alone we are indebted for the varied pleasures and advantages derived from the contemplation of great actions, of glorious sufferings, and of virtue honorably rewarded.

*Re-creating
associations
formed by
imagination
from past
transactions*

Delightful to the imagination is the connection which she forms between local presence and past transactions, between those persons and events which history has recorded in her brightest pages, and the places where they lived, or have rendered illustrious. The man who could visit, without more than common emotion, the glorious straits of Thermopylæ, or

the ruins of Crotona, is little to be envied for the regularity of his feelings, and less to be admired for his love of liberty and learning; for he who is not warmed with generous enthusiasm when he feels himself on the very spot where liberty sustained her severest struggles, or philosophy taught her purest lessons, may be an honest man, but he can hardly be either disinterested or amiable. By the power of association, which awakens the fancy and gives birth to a train of corresponding ideas, even the researches of the antiquarian may be rescued from contempt, for a desire to be acquainted with the dress, the manners, the amusements, the taste, and the buildings of our ancestors, when proceeding from a love of former times, and not from mere idle curiosity, becomes a laudable pursuit, and in such a case, a respect for antiquity is a respect for human nature. The imagination of man is never exalted to so high a pitch as in the contemplation of a great first cause; hence it arises, that the most sublime works of art are those which are consecrated to religious worship; a slender foundation, on which however, great buildings have been erected. The temples of Egypt, of Greece, and of modern Europe under popery, are justly considered as the most stupendous

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monuments of human ingenuity; among the latter, our Gothic cathedrals, as they are vulgarly called, excite in all minds of sensibility and taste, the strongest ideas of grandeur and magnificence, and, independent of any religious feeling, it is impossible to contemplate even their remains, without admiration and wonder. The elegant simplicity of some, the exuberant ornament of others, and the immensity of them all, seem to have engrossed all the taste and labor of the ages in which they were built, and had the priests who now possess them, either zeal or knowledge equal to those who first raised them, they might almost endure to eternity.

*is from
anticipating
future.*

The power of imagination in recalling the past, is not more wonderful than in anticipating the future, so that it has been said, and I believe with truth, that the greatest part of our enjoyment consists rather in the anticipation of what we expect, than in its actual possession. How many gay and delightful prospects, which fancy had drawn to our view, have vanished, or been darkened, when the hour of fruition arrived! In the bright season of youth, when all is expectation and delight, how anxiously do we look forward to scenes of fancied delight, which, when enjoyed, pall upon the sense, and

leave us only languor and disappointment! How earnestly do we renew the faded lines of imagination, which becoming more vivid and brighter than ever, still lead only to the repetition of satiety! Must we not acknowledge then, that the future, which is the widest region of imagination, affords us the greatest pleasure, as the past can never be recalled, and the present is seldom enjoyed? To imagination we are indebted for those pleasing day-dreams, or waking visions, those castles in the air, which, tho' reason will not allow us to rely on, she does not forbid us to indulge; by these we are withdrawn from the tedious or painful sensations of the present, and are soothed or amused, during many a lingering hour of wakefulness, sickness, and sorrow. In these the lover enjoys, with fancied delight, the future converse and company of his mistress, in scenes of happiness which life can never afford; the merchant riots in visionary prospects of gain, which, in the common course of things, he can never acquire; the philosopher indulges in dreams of benevolence, which the cold, rude, coarse selfishness of the world renders for ever impossible; the ambitious man extends his views of gratification beyond the sphere of earthly possibility; and the man who

I

The Imagination

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is satisfied even with moderate enjoyments, delights himself with the anticipation of that tranquil happiness, which the ill-natured chances of the world never place within his reach. Life is thus passed away in visions of future bliss, and death overtakes us before they are realized. Whatever is not capable of being demonstrated by reason, or by evidence, is derived from the imagination. To imagination all systems of religious belief owe their origin; and however, we may admire them as poetical fictions, we cannot but deplore their fatal influence on society, by the dissensions and divisions they have created among men.

*Religion
indebted to
his power
of the mind*

To the power of imagination religion owes all her pleasures, and all her terrors, as futurity exists only in idea; for tho' faith can work wonders as well as believe them, yet no founder of a religion can do more than promise or denounce, and tho' his followers may believe in his word or his power, he can never alter the nature of things; even a Deity cannot make the future to be present, nor convert probability into certainty.

*Hope
results from
its exercise*

The pleasures of hope have their birth from imagination, and who that has ever experienced their delights, will fail to bless that power to which he is indebted for the brightest part of

his existence? The lively sensations of hope cheer us in the gloomy hours of sickness and solitude, and add a charm even to prosperity. Imagination, enlightened by hope, leads us through the dreary journey of life with cheerfulness, and reconciles us to the sufferings of the present; for who could support the *tedium* of an existence spent in a state of banishment from the beauties of nature and art, and the pleasures of intellectual society, unless the bright beams of imagination cheered him by the prospect of future happiness, and hope gave him the earnest of enjoyment? Without imagination, hope has no food to feed on, and without hope, imagination will soon perish.

The future prospects and condition of our children afford a wide field for imagination, and give the anxious parent many alternate hours of uneasiness and pleasure. To picture in our minds their advancement and happiness, their success in the acquisition of fame, wealth, honors, respect, or learning, just as suits our ideas of what is good and right; to fancy we behold in them the friends of mankind, the amiable patterns of conjugal life, or the learned instructors of future times, repays us in some measure for the care of their education, and gives us a momentary, transient delight, tho'

*It pictures
the future
prospect of
our children.*

The Imagination

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our wishes should never be accomplished. It aids and supports us, too, in the great work of instruction, and gives us ideas as to the views or principles by which their education should be directed; for he who has never formed in his mind the idea of something superior to what he is used to, will never arrive at any great degree of excellence. Tho' the future condition of our children affords a boundless scope for imagination and pleasing conjecture, yet it ought not to be indulged in, to the prejudice of useful exertion; we should not be content with imagining what they may be, but endeavour to make them such as we desire; for imagination may mislead, if not tempered by judgment, and restrained by prudence.

*in its powers
in sleep*

Having hitherto considered the power of fancy solely with regard to the common affairs of life, past and future, it is time now to speak of those operations which do not strictly belong to any of these descriptions, and yet partake of the nature of them all. The imagination is awake, when the reason and the senses are asleep, and, in the visionary pictures of a dream, affords us delights which our dull existence can never equal, and heaven itself can never exceed. Who that has conversed in sleep with the dear, departed friends of his

youth, or the grave companions of his riper years; who that has enjoyed, in ideal rapture, the prospect of countries more beautiful than nature ever formed, does not lament to return to the tedious monotony of life, and change these gay visions of sunshine for the dim twilight of existence? Yet, on the other hand, the frightful forms which imagination, under the pressure of bodily uneasiness, frequently presents to us in sleep, make us rejoice to find that it was all a dream, and feel ourselves released from ideal difficulties and positive suffering.

To imagination we are indebted for all the ornaments and embellishments of life. Taste and judgment can only direct, but imagination gives birth to all that is elegant, grand, and beautiful. To her we owe the varied power of music, the lively creations of poetry, the animated effects of painting, the statuary that seems to live and breathe, the delightful productions of natural landscape, the sublime conceptions of architecture, and the living efforts of the actor. In all these arts, imagination exercises her power by two different methods; by the first she is active in those who create works of genius, and by the second, she is only excitable in those who receive pleasure from her

Imagination est mère des arts ; ils sont vains sans la speculation : mais tels que l'air qui se dégage de la terre ils s'élèvent jusqu'aux cieux ; lorsque avec sagesse vire leur entraves.

The Imagination

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Music

operations. The one is the effect of nature, the other of cultivation, for a man may receive delight from works of fancy, who has no power to exert that faculty originally. The musical composer, who, without a lively, rich, and fertile imagination, sits down to the work of composition, may run the changes on the gamut, and produce something very wonderful and difficult to perform, but he will never charm the senses, nor excite the imagination of any human being; and without conceiving characters suited to his music, he will never produce any thing pathetic, animating, nor sublime. In this respect, the musician is often indebted to the poet, who first imagines the subject and the characters of his drama, while the other adapts airs suited to the different ideas which are meant to be excited; and here Dryden and Handel accord with each other. Another effect of music, not less pleasing, is, by soothing and harmonious sounds, not particularly adapted to any subject, to raise a train of delightful ideas in the minds of the hearers. Whoever effects either of these purposes, exerts his imagination pleasantly and usefully.

182
Poetry

The creations of poetry⁴⁵ are, perhaps, superior to those of any other of the elegant arts. Exalted above all earthly joys and sorrows, she

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exerts her powers in a world of her own, and lifts the soul awhile into another sphere, where no sensual pains nor delights can find room to intrude. There is a charm in poetry, which they who have never felt, can never imagine; it touches with so gentle a sweetness, it kindles with so keen a fire, it animates with so thrilling a rapture, that its delights exceed the power of utterance, and can only be expressed by gestures or by tears.

36
The power of imagination, in the works of the pencil, operates immediately through the senses, and produces its effects in proportion to the progress of the artist in the principles and performance of his art, and when these arrive at any great pitch of excellence, painting becomes a school of fancy, history, and morality.

4
The efforts of imagination in statuary are similar to those in painting, but she employs different means to effect the minds of spectators. She represents models of ideal grace, strength, or beauty, and becomes, by these means, equally subservient to the purposes of pleasure and instruction, equally capable of giving lessons in taste and morality, and extending the elegant amusements of society.

5
The designer in landscape works with different materials from those employed in any other

30
Paint

4
Statu

5
Land
Scen

The Imagination

72

art, yet his excellence is equally dependent on the strength and correctness of his imagination. He must have ideas of picturesque beauty, similar to those represented on canvas, which the mattock and the spade must imprint on the face of nature, and preserve them by constant attention; for his works are liable to be perpetually defaced, as they are for ever exposed to the rudeness of the elements and the changes of nature, and therefore stand in need of more constant repair. They equally contribute to amuse and delight, tho' they have not much tendency to improvement.

*62
architecture*

Ideas of grandeur and beauty must have existed in the imagination of the architect, before he could have produced such buildings as St Peter's at Rome, and the Rialto at Venice.— The actor who can justly represent the finest characters of Shakespeare or Racine, must conform his imagination to that of the poet, and be inspired with similar ideas.

*Sympathy
proceeds
from the
Imagination*

The pleasures and the pains of sympathy spring from imagination alone, for without it, we never could partake of the happiness of others, nor feel for their distresses; it is neither from actual knowledge, nor from remembrance, that we have any idea of their feelings.

Imagination refined by virtue, is the source of honor, tenderness, and delicacy. The spirit of chivalry owed its origin to a lively conception of ideal wrongs; it tended to refine the minds of barbarians above the gross feelings of mere personal injury, and taught them to form ideas of virtue exalted above the coarse collisions of the passions, and to comprehend the nature of moral excellence. The tenderness which we conceive for the feelings and distresses of others, exists only in imagination, yet it is a source of pleasure to refined souls, and equally gratifies him that bestows and him that receives its effusions. The violence of the passions is frequently corrected by the imagination; for the idea of giving pain to others frequently restrains us from saying and doing many things to which, by some sudden emotion, we are impetuously urged; and it prompts also that delicate attention to the feelings of others, which most of all things sweetens the intercourse of society.

The arbitrary conventions of civilization, which sometimes produce good and sometimes evil, have their source in imagination; for their objects have no intrinsic value in themselves, and therefore derive all their consequence from the power of fancy and mutual

Civil Conventions
original in Imagination

The Imagination

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agreement. Gold and silver have no other value than what we please to give them.— They cannot be eat or drank, but that which we imagine them to resemble, may; by the help of imagination, we transfer to each other, the produce or representative of labor, which is the only thing that has any true value in use or enjoyment. A piece of lace, or of silver, exquisitely worked, may from fancy derive a value equal to the labor of a man for years, but, after all, it remains just what it was, except in our ideas of its excellence. A severe moralist may condemn this exercise of our imagination, but if it contributes to our comfort and amusement, why should we diminish the number of our enjoyments? When life has so many pains, never let us lessen its pleasures, unless they take from the comfort of others; yet when thousands are in want of bread, that labor is misemployed which is spent in raising luxuries and pampering imaginary desires.

*Expected
derived
in the
one source*

To imagination we owe all our expectations, and our actions proceed, in general, from expectation rather than certainty. Probability, tho' it is at first a calculation of the judgment, becomes heightened by the exercise of imagination; we estimate first, and then imagine;

without the latter, the former could have little effect on our actions; for the cold deductions of reason require to be warmed by the animating pictures of fancy. In our anticipations of future happiness, pains, or amusements, we not only suppose what we may be, but image to ourselves what will be, and thus acquire motives to action, stronger than reason alone could suggest.

The Imagina-
In the early ages of mankind, the force of *more power* imagination was much more powerful, as well *& irregular* as more irregular, than in the polished periods *in the early* of civilized society. It is the same in the first *ages -* stage of our life; for the natural and political state of man considerably resemble each other. The savage and the infant are similar beings, and both more guided by imagination than by reason, hence we see poetry and fiction constitute the mental pleasures of both, and the religion of the former, as well as their history, is nothing more than fable. The sports and amusements of children are all derived from imagination; their little feasts, their visits, and their games, are but pictures copied from something greater than themselves; and all pictures or imitations depend on the strength or weakness of the fancy.

The Imagination

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*'s power
in works
of fancy;
novels, &c.*

The power of imagination in books of instruction⁴⁷ is universally acknowledged, and men of all ages have derived advantage from knowledge mingled with pleasure; for she never comes in so agreeable a form, as when the charms of truth are heightened by the ornaments of fancy. The pleasure we receive from novels and romances, is derived alone from the imagination. And who does not think with rapture on those delightful moments, when the muses, led on by fancy, strew flowers in the rugged path of existence, and guide us through their enchanted groves, which open, alas! but to darkness, and give us back again to the cheerless monotony of common life, which reason may reconcile us to, but fancy and hope can alone render supportable to those who are capable of refined enjoyments.

*47 411
235*

*The evils
attendant
on its excess*

Imagination, tho' the source of many pleasures, has also many evils and many pains; when indulged to excess in the contemplation of ideal excellence, it is apt to make us fastidious, and dissatisfied with things around us, and in the search after imaginary happiness, lose that which is within our reach. They who are for ever conversant with works of imagination, such as novels and poetry, are apt to acquire a

romantic turn of mind, which disqualifies them for the affairs of the world, and makes them unaccommodating to those with whom it is their lot to lead the greatest part of their lives. The passions and sensual appetites gain strength from the pruriency of a warm imagination, which, if not early restrained, leads to hopeless debauchery. The tortures which men of strong imagination frequently suffer from the anticipation of evil, are easier to be conceived than described, but as they are in general groundless, they hardly merit to be more particularly mentioned; and yet with all its evils, the imagination is among our noblest faculties, it exalts one man above another, as much as reason exalts us above all other creatures.

The general effects of imagination are now to be considered; and first, it is worthy of remark, that the pleasures of imagination are ever lively, various, and new, while those of reason fatigue, and those of sense become dull, tiresome, and vapid.

The characters of men depend more upon their imagination than upon any other faculty, for the feelings of men are always in proportion to their imagination; tho' I am sorry to say, that the conduct of some men does not always correspond with their feelings. 'Tis

The Imagination

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imagination alone that exalts one man above another, and makes the man of genius tower over the rest of his species, by the purity of his morals and the grandeur of his thoughts. Filled with ideas of virtue, beauty, and happiness, he scorns the petty contentions of the world for wealth and power, and looks down with pity or contempt on the mean disguises of dissimulation and flattery. He keeps his mind for ever intent on that purity and refinement, which tho' ideal, can only preserve him from the filth and folly of the world. He knows no superior, but in virtue and talents, and considers the trifling forms and distinctions of society, as the sports and amusements of children. Such a man is born to reform and improve his species; and tho' he may be sneered at by the vulgar great, or laughed at by the thoughtless mob, it is impossible, if he takes the trouble to instruct his fellow-creatures, that he should not amend and purify the degraded state of society.

*ffords the
of dis-
inction
between
vulgar &
superior
minds -*

Imagination makes the great distinction between vulgar and superior minds, for they who are able to exert, or to receive pleasure from her various powers, resemble the favored guests at the marriage feasts of the Jews, who were admitted into a splendid and illuminated chamber, while the rest were kept out in a state of

comparative darkness. The vulgar can reason and reflect, but they cannot conceive new ideas; yet if they are strangers to the pleasures of imagination, let it be remembered, that they are also exempt from its pains; but for all this, there is no man of taste or sensibility, who would think for a moment of exchanging even the acutest pangs which flow from a fine imagination, for the dreary comforts of apathy.

The power of imagination is not less capable *It is* of producing moral beauty, than the beauties of *abst* art. The painter and the sculptor imagine and *mora* execute something more beautiful than nature ever created; and the moralist, to improve mankind, must conceive more than can ever be performed, for if his maxims only keep pace with the state of society, the world would never grow better; it is only by holding up models of excellence more pure than the actual state of things, that mankind can ever be enlightened or improved. *49, 51*

A man of warm imagination may be imprudent, but he can never be wholly depraved, *a wo* for he who can picture to himself the distress *image* or happiness of others, unconnected with his *can* own, must feel for them in some degree, if he *depr* has not been hardened by early prejudice, or frequent disappointment, and he will act as he

Il n'est permis cependant qu'aux génies rares nous faire aimer le beau idéal. Étant persuadés que ces beautés n'existent pas nous d'elles existent. Nous soupçonnerons et songe ce est de l'accord entre la vérité et songe que résulte le beau idéal.

The Imagination

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feels, when every string in his heart vibrates with responsive sympathy. He who has never rioted in the luxury of a warm imagination, may be coldly and correctly virtuous, but he can never be generous, affectionate, nor tender, he never can experience those fine feelings of philanthropy which expand into universal benevolence.

To what I have said of the nature of imagination, much might be added by men of more fertile invention, for the powers of the mind form an inexhaustible subject of examination and improvement; much has been done toward reducing her operations to the determination of mathematical certainty, but experiments and enquiries continually extended by accurate attention and patient thinking, will do much more towards acquiring that degree of precision in the knowledge of human motives and conduct, which may establish sound principles of morality, and improve the condition of civil society.

CHARACTERS.

Caratteri, temperamenti, il mondo é bello per questo.

GOLDONI.

VARIETY is in all things a source of enjoyment, and tho' there are some objects to which we ought to be constantly attached, yet even these may be seen in different lights, and are capable of affording us new pleasures. The remark of Solomon, that there is nothing new under the sun, is generally true, but not as applied to individuals, for tho' all things in the world which appear to be new, (because they take new forms) are but different modifications of matter, which has existed, most probably, from eternity, yet to those who see them for the first time, they have the air of novelty. No individual can live or act on so extended a scale, that the change of country or of manners

of dia

Characters

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will not present to him something that he has not seen before ; the sphere of action in which the generality of men move, is very limited to them, therefore, by the frequent re-appearance of the same objects, it may be said there is nothing new. Even Solomon, who possessed all that wealth or power could afford, came at last to the end of his enjoyments, and then cried out, with the peevishness of a child who is tired of its playthings, that all is vanity. The situation of kings is not, however, the most favorable to the pleasures of variety ; their enjoyments may be costly, may be exquisite, and far-sought, but being limited to a certain round, both of space and company, they must soon become tiresome and monotonous, for the faculties become blunted, by a continual repetition of the same objects, even if they are pleasing. Variety is most within the reach of him, who, with a moderate fortune, can travel from place to place, partake of the pleasures which different countries afford, and contemplate all the various appearances of the natural and moral world, both of which, considered as to individuals, are endless in their extent and variety.

*The Love of
variety
is congenial to
Man*

The constant pleasure which even the dullest minds experience from a change of objects,

is a proof that the love of variety is congenial to man. The natural world presents us with perpetual variety, but the greatest of all is in human characters, for no two are alike, any more than two faces, so that their diversity is only bounded by the number of the species; yet, for all this, there are many which so nearly resemble each other, as to come under a general description, and without this, the world would be a scene of endless confusion, and men could have no certain criterion whereby to judge of the characters or conduct of their fellow-creatures. Were all men constantly and solely directed by reason, there could be no difference in their actions, and consequently no variety in their character, for reason is uniform, consistent and steady; but as passion forms a part of our nature, and custom, caprice, and prejudice, make up the rest of our composition, these simple materials, like the notes of the gamut, are capable of endless variations; yet reason, like harmony, is the principle which binds them together, and preserves them from confusion and discord.

The casual circumstances which form the distinctive marks of character among men, are generally at first so slight and imperceptible, as to escape the eye even of the acutest ex-

*The distinctive
character
of men
imposed*

Characters

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aminer; they principally operate in early youth, when the connection between cause and effect, on the human mind is hardly to be perceived, and are, therefore, erroneously attributed to a natural disposition; yet in men more advanced in life, it is sometimes not difficult to distinguish the particular circumstances, which form their tendency to a particular turn of character. The man whom a long acquaintance with the worst of his species, whom disappointment or distress has rendered dissatisfied with all around him, and hopeless of any thing better, becomes a gloomy misanthropic enemy to the present state of things, not from any benevolent purposes of general melioration, but out of pure ill-nature and revenge. He rails at that dishonesty, which he once looked upon with indifference, while he partook of its spoils, but when he becomes a sufferer, instead of making many others suffer, he sees the matter in a different light, and finds his only satisfaction in exposing the villainy which he once looked upon with approbation and complacency. He becomes a reformer, not from principle, but from malice, and a patriot from pure misanthropy, not so much to redress the grievances of others, as to revenge his own. Some there are, who, hav-

42
1242
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*Common
rigin of
Reformers.*

ing spent their fortunes by extravagance, become advocates for reform, in hopes of mending their condition, and getting rich by others' ruin; such men should first reform themselves, before they are trusted with the public concerns. Reformers are to be found in all states, who seek for a change of affairs rather to satisfy their own disquiet, than to improve the condition of others. Among this set of men there are infinite varieties of character, and tho' the object of reform in all states is, or ought to be, the same, viz. to remedy those grievances whereby the people are deprived of their comforts, yet such are the different views and sentiments of men, that there is, perhaps, not above one third of the whole who in any one point resemble each other.

The various shades of character which distinguish individuals from each other in society, *the distinction among individuals* form a constant subject of amusing contemplation to the philosopher, who penetrates into the *a source of amusement* recesses of the human heart, and judges of *contempt* things not from their appearances, but from their distinctive qualities. The dull monotonous forms of polished society, leave little room for any display of character among the generality of men, yet there are some whose minds are of so peculiar a temper, as to shew their

Characters

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true motives, notwithstanding these restraints. Were it not for custom, fashion, and the slavish dependence of each man on other people's opinions, we should have a much greater variety of character than the world at present affords. It has been remarked by foreigners, that this country, where the people are under fewer restraints from the government, than in despotic monarchies, contains more eccentric characters than any other in Europe, and to a certain degree it is true, for undoubtedly an Englishman is left more to himself in the disposition of his time and property, than any other man in this quarter of the globe, hence results that variety of character which is to be found throughout, but particularly in the metropolis, and hence also the pleasure which an Englishman derives from an acquaintance with men of all ranks. One Turk or one Russian resembles another in almost every thing, but there are hardly two Englishmen alike, except in the general features of their character, viz. their love of their country, their bravery, and their love of liberty; these are mixed and compounded with so many other qualities, that tho' they are strong enough alone to form a national character, yet there are hardly two individuals alike.

The characters of most men depend on the *charac*
 circumstances in which they are placed, more *more &*
 than on their natural disposition. There is *on Circ*
 one thing, however, in which men of all cha- *than*
 racters agree, which is never wholly to forget *natur*
 their pecuniary interest; and the longer a man *dispo*
 lives in the world, the more he will be con-
 vinced that little dependence is to be placed on
 gratitude, friendship, or opinions, where they
 come in competition with this motive. Young
 men who set out in the world, see things only
 on the bright side, and fancy others honest,
 because they are themselves pure; or they
 form high notions of honor and integrity, and
 think the world may be reformed by the mere
 effect of principles; but they live a few years,
 and find out their mistake. I am not defend-
 ing such a state of things, or wishing to diminish
 the purity of the younger part of society, I am
 only stating facts which I lament. Such being
 the case, it is so rarely that we find a man pre-
 serve uncorrupted integrity beyond the period
 of his youth, that such a man (if any is to be
 met with), is considered as a character who
 differs from the rest of the world, and enter-
 tains chimerical notions, which exist only in the
 republic of Plato and the Utopia of More; a
 man whom some people pity, and others despise.

Characters

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ding
reason
of
character

Characters may be divided, first, into public and private; and next, into great, common, and odd; among these are to be found good, bad, and mixed. The great and the eccentric are the only characters that are worthy of much notice, and of the first I will give some specimens.

difficulty
certainly
private
characters

To find out the true characters of men in private life, is a matter of no small difficulty, and if we hardly know ourselves, is it wonderful that we should know so little of others? The difficulty is still greater in public life, and greatest of all with those of past times. The private lives of great men are generally so little known, that, unless their conduct is grossly wicked, their motives of action are generally hid from the public eye. The fulsome old maxim, "*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*," has contributed to keep men in the dark, as to the characters of those who have been long dead, and prejudice, partiality, and the insufficiency of biographers, have rendered it for ever impossible to place them in their true light; all that we must look to is the future. It cannot, therefore, be too frequently inculcated, that they who undertake to give the lives and characters of others to the public should be free from every improper bias, and furnished with

ample information as to the conduct and motives of those whom they thus undertake to deliver to posterity. It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that they who read history or biography, should find in them an exact transcript of past transactions, for, without this, they are of little use either as patterns to imitate, or examples to deter; they may amuse, but they cannot improve us; they are not history, but romance.

The difference between temper and character is frequently confounded, tho' no two things can be more unlike. Temper consists in those dispositions of the heart in which all men resemble each other in their different descriptions viz. sullen, obstinate, hasty, proud, or malicious. Character is formed of those peculiar propensities, those likes and dislikes, those pleasures and pains, by which one man differs from another so much, that he composes almost of himself a particular species. The component parts of all men are the same; it is the manner in which they are mixed together that forms their character.

Pope has remarked, that most women have no characters at all, which is not equally true of men. The same author has observed, that there are as many kinds of men as moss; of

*Temper
Character
often
confused*

*less de
than 1*

Characters —

20

women the differences are less frequent, and tho' more numerous than the great moral poet allows, yet they are certainly more capable of general descriptions than those of men; their education and the events of their lives are more nearly alike, and therefore their characters will have a greater resemblance to each other; yet even among them there is great room for contemplation, and sufficient variety to employ the attention of those who are curious in characters; their education is more free, their manners are more unrestrained, and their liberty of thinking considerably enlarged, since the times of Pope; and therefore it is to be expected that the same materials will afford a greater diversity when put together. The characters of men are to be found in their motives, not in their actions, which makes it so difficult to draw those of public men with accuracy; we must endeavour then to lay open their secret and hidden thoughts, and this is to be done, more from the private conduct and sentiments, than from their public professions. To acquire any certain knowledge of the characters of past times, we should read original historians and chroniclers. Froissart, Grafton, and Harding, the Parliamentary History, and the State Trials, will give us more insight in-

to the true characters of their cotemporaries; than Henry, or Rapin; because without attempting to draw characters, they give us facts and anecdotes. To form an idea of living personages, one private sentiment or action is worth a hundred public deeds or speeches.

The study of characters is not only a pleasant, but the most useful exercise of the mind, *The Stu* for, in our commerce with the world, it is of *Charac* infinite importance to be thoroughly acquainted *pleasing* with those around us, that we do not mistake cunning for wisdom, bluntness for honesty, nor meanness for frugality. The characters of some men vary considerably at different periods of their lives, at least as to the lesser traits, tho' in great fundamental points they may remain still the same. A man who at one period is addicted solely to pleasure, becomes at another the slave of ambition or avarice, and the infidel sometimes turns out a devotee; yet these violent alterations are neither frequent, nor natural.—A gradual change takes place in almost every man's character, according to the different periods of his life; but all extremes excite suspicion of some sort or other.

To a contemplative and inquisitive mind, *of those* there are few greater pleasures than the study *in pop* of different characters which great cities *Cities* afford

Characters

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in their full extent and variety. The different modes of living, and the various pleasures which men of different characters adopt, in a great metropolis, excite the curiosity, but not the surprise, of a liberal man, for he who considers how many motives and impressions operate on mankind, will cease to wonder that they produce an endless variety of characters and he will employ terms of reprobation and contempt to none but those whose vices or passions disturb the repose or invade the property of their fellow-creatures. To describe and to invent a character, is, equally difficult; for the one, penetration and judgment are requisite, but genius alone is necessary for the other. Clarendon excels all historians in the strength of his characters,⁵¹ and Shakespeare, as a poet, is superior to every other. His Richard,⁵² Macbeth, and Othello, are not equalled either by ancient or modern times, and if the construction of his dramas had been a little more artificial, nothing would then have been wanting to make them as great as could be conceived; as it is, however, his characters alone make his best plays superior to those of any other writer; which shews, that however pleasing the rules of art may be to men of refined taste, yet an accurate delineation of nature is the first

Clarendon
&
Shakespeare

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note
p 356

51 There is a sameness however in his manner of drawing characters, which makes him what is styled in painting, "a mannerist"

thing requisite to reach all hearts, to prevail over every other excellence, and to supply every other deficiency.

In the lower ranks of mankind there is little difference of character, and little is to be expected, for the constant occupation of toiling for a living, leaves little room for other thoughts and employments; the same pleasures, the same pains, and the same objects, are common to them all; one sailor is as much like another sailor, as one ploughman resembles his fellow. Yet we now and then find, even among artizans and mechanics, a character to whom chance has given a different turn from the rest of his equals, and formed for the instruction and amusement of those around him; but such, indeed, are rare in all ranks, and much more so in those which afford so little room for variety of sentiments and ideas.

There are certain characters in history which seem to stand out from all those who surround them, and to force themselves on our notice; but those which are the most prominent, are not always the most worthy of our regard. The greatest conquerors and heroes are not always the greatest benefactors of mankind, but very often the reverse, and it will be found, that there are characters not generally known,

Little difference among lower ranks of society

of the most prominent characters of history

Character

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Callicratidas which most deserve our notice. One of these was Callicratidas, a noble Spartan, who possessed all the sterner virtues of that inflexible republic. Submission to the laws, love of his country, a high sense of honor, independence of spirit, and a contempt of those distinctions which depend alone on chance, were the distinguishing marks of his character; he occupies a small space in history, but there are many who fill a larger much less deservedly. A short epitome of his life will show how highly he deserves our esteem. He was sent to supersede Lysander in the command of the fleet, but the hired partizans of the former opposed his authority. His speech to them on the occasion was forcible, and truly laconic. "Had it pleased the state," says he, "I should have been content to stay at home, nor does it affect me that Lysander, or any other man, should be thought a better seaman than I am. Hither I have been sent to command the fleet, and my chief concern is to do my duty. It is my earnest desire to promote the public interest; you can best inform me whether I ought to remain here or return to Sparta." This simple appeal had its effect, and the whole fleet requested him to remain. A short time after, he was sent to Sardis to demand an

arrears of money due from the Persian monarch. The first time he visited the palace, he was told that Cyrus was at dinner. "Well, then," said he, "I will wait till he has dined." He was refused admittance a second time, and returned no more to be again insulted. After this repulse, he applied to the Grecian cities in Asia for their contributions, promising to repay the whole, if he was successful, and adding these memorable words, "Let us shew the barbarians that we can punish our enemies without their aid." His first attack was against Mythymna in the isle of Lesbos, in which he was successful; when it was proposed to sell the Mythymnians for slaves, "No!" replied he, indignantly, "No Grecian citizen shall ever be reduced to slavery while I have the command," Having met the Athenian fleet, he was advised, on account of their great superiority, not to engage, but his reply was such as became a Spartan, and his death was the proof of his sincerity. "Sparta will sustain no injury from my death, but she may if I fly." He was slain very early in the engagement, and victory, after a long and doubtful struggle, decided at last for the Athenians⁽⁵³⁾.

Among the many names which history has consecrated to eternal fame, that of *Aristides* ^{*arist*}

(53) vide *Gilbert* vol 3; & *Xenophon's History* lib. 1. ch 5^o

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the Just stands foremost; his virtues were the produce of a republic, and with him died the name of a republican, in Athens. Other men have been differently represented, according to the prejudices and partiality of historians, or the light in which their characters have been viewed by their biographers; Aristides has but one character with all men, and even Gillies, the constant detractor from republican merit, has given him his due praise. "He was eminently distinguished," says that pleasing historian, "by valor and moderation, the two greatest virtues of a republican. Formed in such schools of moral and political knowledge as then flourished in Athens, he had learned to prefer glory to pleasure, the interest of his country to his own personal glory, and the dictates of justice and humanity even to the interests of his country. His ambition was rather to deserve, than to acquire the admiration of his fellow-citizens, and while he enjoyed the inward satisfaction, he was little anxious about the external rewards of virtue."

The time of his administration was called the Golden Age, and so pure were his hands, that when he died, he did not leave enough to pay the expences of his funeral, but the republic provided for his children. "Themistocles and

Pericles adorned Athens by their buildings and statues, but Aristides adorned it by his virtues." This is the testimony of Plato.—At the representation of a tragedy of Æschylus, when the following words were repeated, "He wishes not to *seem*, but to *be* a good man," all eyes were turned on Aristides. His whole life was consistent, steady, and uniform, unstained by a single vice or crime. 'Tis from such men we form our notions of a divinity.

Pericles was a great character, but his ambition was too strong to leave him at all times honest. He had magnanimity, firmness, and dignity, superior to most of his cotemporaries, and his administration was distinguished as the most brilliant period in the history of Athens; yet he excites our wonder rather than our esteem. Aristides exalted our nature, Pericles only adorned it; we remember the one with admiration, we adore and venerate the other.

Examples are not wanting in history, of states being supported by the virtues and talents of one individual; such was Epaminondas to Thebes; he restored to that state its democratic form of government, and with him it flourished and decayed. When the spirit which gave it life was no more, it perished, after a few ineffectual struggles to maintain its

Pericles

Epaminondas

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consequence. Epaminondas was one of those rare and singular men, who exalt mortality to a rank approaching to divine, and surpass their fellow-creatures by arriving at the highest excellence of their nature, while the rest are content to resemble each other. Tho' born and educated in the rank of nobility, and descended from kings, he owed his elevation above other men, only to his virtues and his talents. He was learned and eloquent, without ostentation, and studied philosophy, arts, and sciences, without pedantry. His military talents place him above most other generals, but his greatest praise was that of being a patriot. He possessed all the simple virtues of a true republican, and despised the vain pomp of dress, equipage, and attendance. His passions were always at the command of his reason, and he was equally proof against the blandishments of riches and power. His last words corresponded with his life, and he died at the age of forty-eight; too early for his country, but not for his own glory. Being wounded at the battle of Mantinea, he asked on which side was the victory; and being answered on the Theban, he replied, "I have lived long enough, for I leave my country triumphant." His friends lamenting to him that he left no family, he replied, "I leave two daughters,

Leuctra and Mantinea, who will transmit my name to posterity." Thus ended one of the greatest men of former times.

Timoleon was distinguished in every action of his life by an ardent and disinterested love of liberty, which entitles him to a place among the greatest characters of antiquity. He put to death his only brother, for having aimed at sovereign power, and devoted his own life to the service of the people of Syracuse, who had long suffered under the tyranny of Dionysius and the Carthaginians. He was successful in his enterprize, and retired to a private station with no other reward than his glory and an unsullied conscience. A memorable speech is recorded of him, which is alone sufficient to illustrate his character, and to prove that all his actions proceeded from principle. Having been maliciously accused of malversation in office, the people of Syracuse, full of gratitude to their deliverer, were ready to tear his accusers in pieces; but they were stopped by Timoleon, who calmly addressed them in these words: "Consider, Syracusans, what you are doing. Remember that every citizen has a right to accuse him whom he thinks guilty; which, if you deny, you destroy that liberty which I consider it the pride of my life to have

Tim.

Characters

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*Publius
Scipio* }

restored." To such magnanimity, how opposite was the conduct of the haughty Roman! Publius Scipio being accused of embezzling a part of the treasure obtained from Antiochus, disdained to answer to the charge, reminding the people that that day was the anniversary of the victory of Zama. On a second accusation, he called for the paper of his accounts, when instead of satisfying the people as they expected, he tore the scroll to pieces in their presence, and, without deigning to give any other answer, retired to a country village in Italy, where he died a short time after, the victim of insulted pride. Such was the difference between a Grecian and a Roman citizen; the pride of the former lay in his submission to the laws; that of the latter in his personal merits.

*Tiberius
Gracchus* }

Tiberius Gracchus was one of those great and good characters, who, tho' feeling strongly for the miseries of mankind, mistake the means of redressing them. He had more honesty than wisdom, and more zeal than prudence; so that whilst intending the greatest possible good, he produced only an increase of calamity. Such men deserve credit for their intentions, tho' their impetuosity hurries them beyond the limits of discretion; they have strong traits of charac-

ter, which distinguish them from the vulgar, but they are oftener the enemies, than the benefactors of mankind.

The state of Rome at the time in which Gracchus proposed the execution of the Licinian law, was sufficient to excite the indignation and pity of every virtuous man; yet the evils he lamented were too strongly rooted in the power of the rich, to be suddenly remedied, and the extreme he proposed was too violent, either to be relished by those whom it injured, or to do good to those for whom it was intended. The accumulation of property in few hands is the cause of many evils, which every good man must deplore; it fomented in Rome the pride and luxury of the rich, and extended the miseries of the poor. Foreign conquest had been the means of introducing immense wealth, and the lands of freemen were cultivated by slaves. Riches and poverty equally produce great vices; and virtue, at Rome, was no longer the road to honor. In this state of things, Tiberius Gracchus proposed his famous Agrarian law, which met with many partizans among the poor, and many opponents among the rich; it cost Rome much confusion, and its author his life, and remains a signal instance of the depravity of that city, and the rash imprudence

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Viriathus

of Gracchus. The virtues of a barbarian are strongly exemplified in the character of Viriathus, the leader of the Lusitanians, or Portuguese, in their struggle with the Romans; from a shepherd he became a captain of banditti; from that he was raised to a prince, and by his virtues shewed himself worthy of his station. He was valiant, prudent, temperate, generous, and just; he despised the luxuries of civilized life, and devoted his whole mind to the salvation of his country—he resisted the Romans for eleven years, and when he died, the forces of the Lusitanians were dispersed.

Agricola

The last great character which Rome produced, after she had lost her liberty, was Agricola—a man who, for his public and private virtues, has been transmitted to posterity by one of the most philosophic historians of ancient times.

Alfred

Tho' modern Europe is by no means so fertile in great examples of virtue as the republics of Greece and Rome, yet some are to be found who do honour to human nature, and redeem the age they lived in from insignificance; but they are few in all countries. Our own may boast of Alfred, Hampden, Sydney, Marvel, Fletcher, and Shippen; Italy of her Andrew Doria; and Spain of her Padilla. Alfred was

one of those great men whose lives form an æra, or resting place, in the history of their country; he was one of the lights of a dark age, which shine for a while, and tho' soon surrounded by a gloom, are never wholly extinct, for even at this day we feel the benefit of his wisdom and the fruits of his experience, in the administration of justice, the regulations of police, and the enjoyment of liberty. His whole life was employed in civilizing and enlightening his subjects, and at his death he left them a legacy which has been transmitted to their remote posterity; notwithstanding all his laws and restraints on the people, the words of his will declared that they were meant only for their benefit; "For Englishmen," said he, "should ever be as free as their own thoughts;" thus dying as he had lived, the benefactor and friend of his people, whom his only desire was to improve. The life of Alfred also affords a strong proof, that no one ever did much good to mankind who had not devoted much of his time to meditation and study. The world is principally indebted to two sorts of men, those who make it better, and those who prevent it from growing worse; among the former of these, Alfred is the most conspicuous; and among the latter, Hampden and Sydney.—

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imphden Hampden, by his bold resistance to arbitrary power, prepared for the overthrow of the monarchy, which, tho' it ended in the establishment of a government more despotic, confirmed the people's right to bring their kings to punishment. *idney* Sidney, by his defence of the same principle, for which he suffered nobly, infused a spirit into the people which led to that change of government from whence we date the confirmation of our liberty. It behoves us and our posterity, therefore, to keep this glorious bequest undiminished and unimpaired.

andrew *marvel* } Andrew Marvel was one of those disinterested patriots who do honor to human nature, and deserve to be held in constant admiration, as examples of purity to those times in which even the possibility of such virtue begins to be doubted. He was the constant satyrast of a profligate court, the steady opposer of a venal ministry, and tho' poor, he could never be bribed. *54*

Fletcher *of* *Salton* } Fletcher, of Salton, the violent enemy of the union with Scotland, has obtained the name of patriot, rather from his principles than his conduct. He detested oppression and arbitrary power in others, tho' he was much inclined to them himself, for he once committed murder *54*

in the heat of his resentment. Tho' the same in principle with Marvel, no two men were in their characters more opposite; the one was lively, gay, and convivial, liberal to those who differed from him, and benevolent to all; the other was sour, splenetic, and revengeful, suffering no one to differ from him even in trifles; a professed republican, tho' in practice a despot; the one was the friend of reform because he wished to preserve the constitution, the other admired all government only in theory; the one was beloved even by those whose measures he opposed, the other was hated even by his own party. To the nobler parts of Fletcher's character I should be unwilling not to do justice; he was benevolent in principle, of inflexible integrity, independent, generous, ardent, and ever willing to sacrifice his fortune or his person in support of what he believed to be for the good of mankind, and from the perusal of his writings, it is impossible not to be warmed with the flame of patriotism and benevolence.

Tho' Coxe, in his life of Walpole, has denied *Shu* the name of patriot to Shippen, yet I will not hesitate to pronounce *him* such, who was the constant opposer of the most corrupt administration, except one, ⁽⁵⁶⁾ that ever disgraced this

56 It cannot here be doubted that I mean the ad.
of *Shu*, to wit that of *Toulpole* was innocence
It is to this man's violent opposition to the
Revolution that we owe all the calamities
has occasioned. W.B.

country. He was attached, it is true, from early prejudice, to the house of Stuart; yet he partook of none of their arbitrary maxims, but was the constant friend and advocate of liberty⁷ *note.*
Being committed to the tower for declaring *p 35,* that the King's speech was rather calculated for the meridian of Germany than of England, the Prince of Wales, then at variance with his father, sent him an offer of £1000 as a present, which he declined. Sir Robert Walpole, not only during the life of Shippen, but after his death, repeatedly declared, "that he could not say who was or was not corrupted, but he could say who was not corruptible." Mr Coxe relates this from the authority of Lord Orford. Tho' he was publicly the enemy of Walpole, he had personally a respect for him, and used frequently to say, "Robin and I are two honest men: he is for King George, and I am for King James. The rest only desire places under either." His speeches are pointed and forcible, but his manner of delivering them was too vehement and rapid. The strong features of his character were firmness and integrity. His humour was keen and sarcastic, tho' his temper was gentle. He was regular and economical in the disposition of his time and fortune, and never suffered his expences to ex-

ceed his income.¹⁵⁹¹ He was the last of English patriots.

*note
p 357*

The character of Andrew Doria is thus drawn by Robertson. "Having freed Genoa from the yoke of France, it was in Doria's power to have rendered himself the sovereign of his country, which he had so happily delivered from oppression; but, with a magnanimity of which there are few examples, he sacrificed all thoughts of aggrandizing himself, to the virtuous satisfaction of giving liberty to his native country,—the highest object at which ambition can aim. Twelve persons were appointed to new-model the constitution, and the same form of government which has subsisted since that time, was established with universal applause. Doria lived to a great age, and acquired an ascendancy in the state, which was upheld by a veneration of his virtues, not by a dread of his power, and his name is handed down to posterity by the Genoese, as the Father of his country, and the restorer of its liberty."

*andrew
Doria.*

During the early part of the reign of Charles V. the people of Castile, wearied out with their grievances, and determined to seek redress, formed a confederacy, to which they gave the name of the *Junta*; there were among them many men of talents and character, but the

*Junta
agb
Char V.*

Characters

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most remarkable was Don John de Padilla. Their designs were extensive, and aimed at no less than a complete restoration of their ancient liberty. The language of their remonstrances breathed a spirit hardly to be expected in an age and country so little enlightened. Their leader⁵⁹ was possessed of talents and virtues fully equal to so great an undertaking; but the power of the crown was too strong to be resisted, and they wanted that union and concert among themselves, which are requisite for all great enterprizes. After a few trifling successes, they were totally defeated by the forces of the tyrannical emperor, and Padilla was instantly led to execution. where he died with the spirit and fortitude of a martyr in the noblest cause. When Bravo, his fellow-sufferer, expressed his indignation at being called a traitor, he replied with dignity: "Yesterday was the time to have displayed the spirit of a gentleman, to-day we must shew the resignation of Christians."—Such were the last words he ever uttered.—There is a glory that brightens even the fall of a great man, which villains can never attain to in their highest prosperity. His letter⁶¹ to his wife, and another to the city⁶² of Toledo, display his character more strongly than any labored panegyric; and as Robertson

59 note
p 358

61 note
p 358
62 note
p 359

60—vide Robertson's Chas 5 Vol 3 p 25.

has translated them, I will give them in the notes.

Another illustrious example of distinterested patriotism deserves to be mentioned, and I have then finished, for the present with the bright side of human nature, and must undertake the painful task of recording her dishonor. John Frederic, Elector of Saxony, justly stiled the *Magnanimous*, was one of the principal supporters of the protestant cause in Germany, against the arms and tyranny of Charles the Fifth. After several unsuccessful struggles, he was taken prisoner by that monarch, and condemned to death; he received the news of his sentence with the greatest calmness, while playing at *chess* with his fellow-prisoner, Ernest of Brunswick, and, after some philosophic reflections, resumed his game.⁶³ His triumph was not yet complete; fate had reserved him for other trials, and at the intercession of his wife and family, he consented to purchase his life by the surrender of his dominions and liberty. On these conditions, he remained for many years a prisoner to the inhuman Charles, who carried him about as an evidence of his triumph over the protestant cause; but tho' he was master of his person,

John
of
Saxony.

63 note
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he could not enslave his mind; for when he proposed to him to sign an infamous compromise of his opinions, which was termed the *Interim*, he indignantly refused, adding, that his life was of little value compared to his honor and consistency. He remained a prisoner for five years, till the peace of Passau rendered his further captivity useless as a matter of policy, for humanity had no share in his release. Whether he afterwards obtained a part of his hereditary dominions or not, remains uncertain, but he finished his life as he had spent it; a memorable instance how little fame is to be derived from virtue unattended by ambition. I have purposely selected such characters from history, to shew how much more they deserve our admiration, than those political intriguers who scruple no act of meanness or villainy to accomplish their ambitious purposes; and that high rank and great power, tho' for a while they may lend a blaze of splendor to confound the multitude, can never enlighten mankind like the quiet flame of persevering integrity.— Having now produced some few characters who do honor to human nature, I will reverse the picture, and present to view some others who disgrace their species, for the sake of

64 not
to 36.

shewing how far our nature may be depraved.

The most bloody monster recorded in the history of ancient Greece, was Cleon, the son of Clænetus. He was the Robespierre of former times. I need hardly say more of him. By a species of eloquence adapted to enslave the passions of the multitude, he had risen from the lowest origin to the highest offices in the state, and in every instance shewed himself unworthy of power or confidence. He had the art, like many other tyrants, to disguise his designs, and under pretence of consulting the public good, to gratify his own passions and resentments. His power was not so great as that of the French tyrant, for the people of Athens were not so degraded as those of France: they had long been free, and the others had only just emerged from slavery; yet what he wanted in power, was supplied by inclination; and wherever he could, he shewed himself equal in cruelty to any tyrant of ancient or modern times. The city of Mytelene, in the island of Lesbos, had revolted against Athens, but was finally subdued by Paches, and the citizens being all taken prisoners, were completely in the power of Athens. On this occasion, the Athenians deliberated how they were to be treated; such was the in-

*Cleon
the*

*66th
p 36*

*(65) but Gillies' ancient Greece vol 4 p 264
& Thucydides Lib ii p 526*

Characters

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fluence of Cleon's eloquence, that an inhuman decree was issued, condemning them all to death; and thus for a time the monster seemed satisfied. But the Athenians soon became convinced of their cruelty and injustice; they dispatched a vessel to suspend the execution, which arrived time enough to arrest the hand of death, and give leisure for a fresh deliberation. In this, the bloody policy of Cleon was again displayed, and his speech on the occasion, given us by Thucydides (tho' we are not to suppose it original), conveys his full sentiments. It is a master-piece of cruel sophistry, and breathes slaughter from one end to the other. The merciful persuasion of Deodatus prevailed, and the former decree was reversed; yet was the punishment of these unhappy revoltors sufficiently severe, according to the rigor of the Athenian policy. The influence of Cleon, however, gradually declined, and the last blow was given to his popularity by Aristophanes, who represented him on the stage in his comedy of *The Knights* in the most odious colours, and rendered him the object of hatred and contempt. By such characters, the people of all countries should be warned against the flattery of ambitious men, who talk to them of their rights, their injuries, and their liberties,

9) It is remarkable that the ridicule of Aristophanes destroyed the best (Socrates) & the worst man (Cleon) that Athens ever produced. Ridicule is a two-edged sword! -

and pretend to consult the interest of those whom they inwardly despise, while they seek only to obtain their own diabolical purposes.

Among the worst characters recorded in history, that of Appius Claudius stands foremost. His vices were of such a nature, as to leave no room for a single virtue; for he was a compound of ambition, pride, cruelty, lust, and cunning.—*Monstruma vitiis nulla virtute redemptum.*

appius
claud

⁶⁸ The French revolution, tho' fertile in great crimes, has produced also illustrious examples of virtue, and unusual traits of character; for at such a period, when all the restraints of society were removed, and when the ties of nature seemed to be loosened, there was room for a display of such qualities and dispositions as are not permitted to shew themselves in the more quiet periods of settled government. Great sufferings call forth great virtues, and power is the nurse of crimes. No history of former times affords such a variety of characters, which being presented to us almost before our eyes, and within the reach of our feelings, are likely to be better understood than those which we see only through the medium of history.

68 no
p 26

The cha
racter
of the
French

The character of Mirabeau, which stands foremost in the history of the revolution, as

Mira

Characters

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being the first active agent in that eventful period, is now no longer doubtful. With talents suited to any purpose, he wanted those solid virtues which inspire respect and confidence, and therefore, tho' courted by all parties, he was trusted by none. The Jacobins despised, and the Royalists dreaded him; but at last they won him to their party. He had that intuitive quickness of penetration, which enabled him to perceive at a glance, the remote tendency of every measure, and that happy force of expression, by which he compelled other people to see what he wished them, by a few words; nay, he could do more; he could make them believe what was never intended, provided it suited his own purpose. He was, therefore, completely master of his audience, whenever he spoke, and never wasted his time in vain harangues. His passions, and his indulgence of them, were equally unbounded, and what he wished, he seldom wanted the power to obtain, for his means were superior to those of all other men. To the most profound dissimulation, he united the greatest openness and plainness; his arrogance and audacity were invincible; it was impossible to disconcert him. He was at all times in possession of his countenance, his voice, and his temper, and when it

suited his purpose, he could display such a degree of force and earnestness, as communicated the same to all around him. His ardor and impetuosity carried every thing before them. He could bear no opposition, and he possessed the power of silencing all his opponents. Born and educated in the rank of nobility, he never forgot the manners of a court; and tho' personal sufferings had rendered him the enemy of oppression, he still retained in secret, his prejudices in favour of royalty. No one ever excelled him in the knowledge of mankind; he penetrated into the most secret motives of those with whom he was concerned, and discriminated the different features of every man's character, and those in which one man differed from another. He was admirably suited in all respects for the leader of a party; but he had no need of a party, for he was the leader of the nation in all its efforts from slavery to liberty. He has been accused of having a share in the Orleans' conspiracy, and it is certain he was connected with many of its members, but he never acted with them as a party any further than it suited his own ideas of personal interest. He certainly never intended to go all the lengths of the revolution, because he knew too well that in such a struggle he

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might lose all that he had been contending for. He wished to be the first minister of a limited monarchy, and his views of ambition extended no further. His expression on his death-bed, that the monarchy had died with him, was a strong proof that he had engaged himself in its support; and it is, perhaps, not hazarding too much to say, that, had he lived, he might have saved from destruction both the monarch and the throne; for his eloquence and personal influence were able to effect any thing. He was himself a tower of strength to whatever party he espoused, and had he lived, he might have been a bulwark to the court, to break the violence of contending parties.—Had he lived, the Robespierres, Talliens, and Legendres, would have remained in insignificance, and many of the horrors of the revolution might have been prevented; but it happened otherwise, and he perished by an untimely death, in the vigor of his talents and the height of his power. He was a patriot in theory, but in action he thought only of himself. The rights and liberties of the people, and the sacred principles of morality, were in his head, but not in his heart. He could write, and he could speak, of all that was virtuous, amiable, and honorable, but in action he lost

sight of his principles, and afforded a miserable example how feeble is the control of reason, over strong and predominant passions. No eloquence in modern times (if eloquence is to be estimated by its effects), is to be compared to his, for he never spoke without gaining his object.—His private life was a shocking series of profligacy and immorality; tho' he felt all the delicacy of the tenderest love, yet he indulged at times in the coarsest intemperance. His letters to his mistress, who was the wife of another man, express all the feelings of the most refined and delicate passion, united to the grossest sensuality. In the art of seduction he was unrivalled; for tho' nature had denied him every personal attraction, yet such were the illuring spells of his conversation and manners, that no woman whom he chose to attack could resist his advances. His person was large and coarse, his face was disfigured by the small-pox, and his features were strong and repulsive, yet for all this, he could talk himself agreeable, for he had a tongue to charm even the guarded ear of suspicion and prudence, and accomplish what few men would dare to attempt. By every action of his life he forwarded the progress of the revolution, and it was brought to its present termination only by his death. The

fatal resolution of the monarch to fly the kingdom, was the first consequence of that event, and all his future measures tended only to hasten his destruction. Had Mirabeau lived, he would probably have saved the throne; and tho' we should acquit him of all guilt for the share he had in overturning despotism, the Brissotines were not equally innocent in the overthrow of the monarchy.

Brissot

The character of the celebrated Brissot has been variously represented; by his friends he has been exalted to the rank of Aristides, and by his enemies, he has been degraded to the level of a pick-pocket. The truth probably lies between the two extremes, and, after a strict examination, we shall find him neither wholly profligate, nor completely virtuous. That he was an enthusiast, there can be no doubt; for he had formed romantic notions of social happiness, which no state of society has ever yet realized, and probably none ever will. To make way for this pure reign of equality, it is certain that he conspired to overthrow the monarchy, without possessing sufficient energy or talents to substitute another government in its room. Tho' he should be acquitted of personal ambition, yet, having destroyed or endangered the happiness of thousands merely to

indulge in a favorite speculation, we must not pronounce him thoroughly honest; for no man can deserve that name, who does a positive evil for the sake of uncertain good. Ambition assumes various shapes, and that of Brissot seems to have arisen from the vanity of leading a party, which was to regenerate the world; it was not the savage ambition of Bonaparte or Robespierre, the mere lust of power, or passion for dominion. Tho' qualified for the leader of a philosophical sect, he was by no means fit for the head of a political party. By a long and frequent custom of reflection on the most important subjects, he had acquired a considerable degree of accuracy and precision in his thoughts, and a strong, vigorous method of expression. He was a good writer, but when called upon to act, his judgment seemed to forsake him, as if it was something to which he was not accustomed, and therefore unequal. He had the art of persuasion in private, for his manners were gentle, and his conversation attractive. He had the power of attaching his friends to him strongly, but not the means of confounding his enemies. Robespierre, with talents for speculation far inferior, rose above all the parties that successively opposed him, by the mere force of intrigue, and a practical

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p 165

knowledge of mankind. The history of Brissot's imprisonment and death, is comfortable to the character he maintained through life. During those trying periods, he was calm, dignified, and resigned, and never from the first indulged a hope of pardon or mercy. That he was desirous of improving mankind, the general tendency of his writings leaves little room to doubt; for no man can feel the sentiments he expresses, without desiring to put them in practice; but it is also evident, that not having been educated, nor lived according to the strictest principles of moral integrity, he was too little scrupulous about the means which he employed, and had therefore adopted that most dangerous political maxim of doing evil for the sake of good. Whoever attempts to overturn a government, before its iniquity is intolerable, and before he is certain of substituting another quickly in its room, is answerable for all the consequences that may ensue, and impeachable at the bar of humanity for high crimes and misdemeanors. That this was not the case with Brissot and his party, the event fully proved, and tho' some, or even all of them, may have intended much good to mankind, and been animated by the purest republican virtue, yet this is not sufficient to

acquit them of the means they employed to overturn a government which had been so long established, and so lately reformed. Having conceived monarchy to be the greatest of all evils, and the cause of all others, they thought that every thing they desired must result from its overthrow. They had no ~~settled~~ scheme of conduct, no unity of design or action, and were, therefore, forced from the helm of the state, which they were unable to manage, by a fierce band of ruffians, whose only object was pillage and murder.

To relate ^{700-71/2} the bloody consequences of this ³⁶⁶ usurpation, when youth, beauty, talents, and all that could adorn and dignify our nature, were the objects of proscription and murder, belongs to the pen of history; my humble office is only to give a faint idea of the virtues and talents of one set of men, who were sacrificed to the jealousy of a sanguinary tyrant. The Brissotines soon began to be sensible of the fatal error into which their mistaken zeal had hurried them, and how little they were able to direct the passions of the multitude, and they made some atonement for their misconduct, by their firmness in suffering, and their dying attachment to liberty.

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Characters

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niaud

Vergniaud, who rivalled in eloquence the fame of Demosthenes, and equalled in virtue the best sages of antiquity, was by nature too indolent to exert himself even on great occasions. His contempt for the generality of the world; did not hinder him from wishing well to his species, ~~and~~ if mankind could be reformed by talking to them, no man was better qualified for the purpose than Vergniaud; but he was too idle to take any further trouble. His connection with the Brissotines was rather the effect of an attachment to his friends, than any desire of being active in the public service, and when he found the party of Robbespierre triumphant, and his own in prison, he gave himself up without one struggle or exertion, even of his eloquence, to save either himself or his friends. He had many opportunities to elude the vigilance of his guards, and by regaining his liberty, to rally in the departments, the slender remains of his party; but he despised them all, and resigned himself to his fate with an indifference which might rather be called apathy, than philosophy. His friends often urged him, while in prison, to prepare an harangue for his trial, which might give him some chance of saving his life, and of con-

foundling, by the thunder of his eloquence, the malice of his enemies; but he was deaf to all their entreaties, even when they pressed him to leave some written memorial which might justify his life and motives, to posterity. He began,—but some more pleasant idea came across his mind, and his pen was thrown aside. He had finished about a quarter of what he intended, when the fatal bell summoned him to trial, or rather to execution. For a while he was roused from his lethargy, and began, before his merciless judges, to pour forth a torrent of irresistible eloquence; they felt its force, and silenced him immediately; from that moment, the voice of him, whose persuasive powers could have rendered even virtue and truth more amiable, became dumb for ever. He was hurried from the bar to the scaffold, where, with a look of pity, contempt, and triumph, he smiled upon his persecutors, and breathed his last sighs for liberty.

Guadet and Gensonnè are inseparably connected in the history of the revolution; they were friends rather from similarity of sentiment, than of temper, for the one was cold, and the other impetuous; the one was a subtle reasoner, the other an eloquent debater; the one was too deliberate for action, and the other too

Guadet
Gensonnè

ardent for reflection, so that both misemployed their talents; but both were men of inflexible honesty and unsullied patriotism, and, in their private lives, they were alike good husbands, fathers, and friends. In their last hours they supported an honorable struggle, which of the two could be the most service to his country by flight. The arguments of Gensonnè were irresistible. Guadet found means to deceive his guards, and fled into his own department, where, after many unsuccessful attempts with others of his party, to raise the country in their favor, he was taken and executed at Bourdeaux. Gensonnè remained in prison with the firmness and spirit of a martyr, and at his execution, shewed the dignity and elevation of his soul, by his looks of contempt for his murderers; for he never deigned to pollute his lips with their names, nor to descend to the meanness of reproach.

*Buzot
Barbaroux
&
Louvet*

Buzot, Barbaroux, and Louvet are the next of those enlightened patriots who deserve our notice. Buzot was a man of lively imagination, and strong passions; yet rigid and inflexible in his notions of justice, and an implacable enemy of fools and knaves. He possessed all the soft and tender affections in the highest degree, but was better qualified for private, than for public

life. He was fastidious, and difficult to be pleased, in his opinions of men, but to those whom he honored with his friendship, he was steadily attached. He was a lover of his species, tho' he lamented to see them degraded by the arbitrary distinctions of society; and he devoted his life, like a zealous republican, to their improvement. His firmness and constancy, in his last difficulties, sometimes forsook him, and he was often tempted to wish that he had never been born: but who can wonder, that a man who so keenly felt the ingratitude of those he was striving to serve, should sometimes sink under afflictions so severe? Nature cannot be at all times equal, and fortune often tries our strength.—Barbaroux was of a tender and *Barbaroux* gentle nature; young, gay, and lively; elegant in his person and manners; yet frank, open, and manly. He was an ardent lover of liberty, proud of his independence, and well informed on every point of literature; yet fond of pleasure and rejoicing in the vigor of his youth. His attachment to Buzot was a friendship founded on mutual esteem and a similarity in the most honorable pursuits; not a partnership in pleasure, a joint fellowship in riot, nor a union of intemperance. His suffering, during the cruel persecution of his party, can only be

Louvet

conceived by men of feeling and elevated minds. His last words to Louvet in which he recommended his mother to his care, shew that he felt all the tenderness of filial piety, and excite the most lively regret for his untimely death. He was guillotined at Bourdeaux, in all the vigor of health and youth. Louvet was the common friend of Buzot and Barbaroux, and served to keep them more closely united, by softening their failings, to each other. He was himself an equal sufferer for the cause of liberty, in whose defence he neither considered his life nor safety, but defended her with equal intrepidity against monarchial and republican tyrants. His political writings will remain a lasting monument of his patriotism and talents, and vindicate him with posterity from all the charges with which the enemies of liberty, loaded him in his lifetime. He was ambitious, ardent, and impatient; and the disappointment of his wishes, by the destruction of his party and the success of villains, preyed upon his spirits, and hastened his end. His manners were simple, his mind was strong and his heart susceptible.— He was one of those few victims who survived the success of Robespierre, and he has left, in the recital of his dangers, ⁽⁷²⁾ a monument to posterity which will serve the future historian in

[72] "Recit de mes perils" par Louvet

describing the horrors of these times; it bears in every line, the stamp of truth and feeling, and makes the reader almost present at the scenes it describes. He died as he lived, in honorable poverty; but he bequeathed, in his writings, a treasure to posterity.

The sufferings and fortitude of Ducos, the two Fronfrede, Valazè, Duchâtel, Boisguyon, Brissot, Roland, Girey Duprè, demand a particular recital, for their conduct in such trying situations serves to illustrate their characters more than volumes of dissertation. Men of feeble minds could not have acted as they did, nor so nobly braved the terrors of death.— Never at one time was there such an extinction of talents and virtue, as on that fatal hour which gave two and twenty of the Brissotines to the scaffold. They were republicans of the stoutest temper, and to the spirit of ancient Romans, they united the refinement of modern philosophy. The love of independence, the hatred of oppression, and the contempt of meanness, treachery, and death, were for ever in their hearts and in their lives, and had they possessed as great talents for action as for speculation, they might have hastened the arrival of that improved state of social intercourse, which probably is now very far distant. Never

Ducos
+
074

were there in any age or country, so many great men united in the public cause, and devoted to the service of mankind. Their sufferings bore a testimony to the dignity of their characters, which no enmity nor malice can overthrow, and they will live in the remembrance of posterity, when their persecutors and calumniators are forgotten or execrated.

In their prisons and at their death they displayed none of that romantic, over-heated zeal, which seems to seek for persecution, and rejoice in sufferings. Theirs was the calmness of philosophic minds, conscious of having intended well, and suffering undeservedly. They sought not death, because they knew it would put an end to the period of their usefulness, but they feared it not, for they knew it to be final and momentary. They preserved their patience, and even their gaiety, in the midst of all the agonies they suffered by separation from their friends, and the thoughts of their approaching distresses; but they inwardly felt many pangs for the unhappy lot of their nearest relations, who were to be left behind them in a cruel and ungrateful world, yet, they concealed with noble dissimulation, these agonizing feelings, because they knew they could neither benefit their friends, nor serve their cause, and might be

mistaken by the multitude for a sign of weakness and timidity. By their conduct, therefore, in their last moments, they excited an interest in their favor, even among the wretches around them, which nothing but the force of tyranny could have suppressed, and left an example to posterity which will never be effaced.

The youth, talents, and interesting appearance of Ducos, the two Fonfrede, Girey Duprè, and Boisguyon, make us lament their fate more severely than even that of their companions; yet their gaiety seemed to lessen the horrors of imprisonment, and supported them even in their last moments. They were all eloquent, lively and ingenious, and to all these qualities, united the most ardent love of liberty, for which they seemed proud to suffer, even to the utmost. Fonfrede the elder, for a few moments, poured forth in secret a flood of tears, at the recollection of his wife and infants; but when perceived by his brother, as if ashamed of his weakness, he hastily replied, "It is nothing." The night previous to their execution was spent in composing and singing hymns to liberty, and their passage to the scaffold was a triumph, rather than a punishment. Girey Duprè was asked, on his examination, if he was acquainted with Brissot. "Yes," replied the

Duprè

Characters

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noble youth, "I knew him well; he lived like Aristides, and died like Sydney." This speech served only to hasten his end; he knew it, and seemed rather to fly, than to walk, from the bar to the guillotine. On ascending the scaffold, he bared his neck, as if for instant murder, and a few minutes after he received the last act of mercy. He perished at the age of twenty-four,—a youth of the most promising talents and irreproachable morality.

Boisguyon

Boisguyon was in all respects a practical philosopher; his virtue was of that mild and gentle nature which never forced itself into notice, nor ever judged harshly of the conduct of others; his whole study was to improve himself, and he succeeded; his self-command was superior to that of the greatest stoics of antiquity, and his information, on most subjects, was various, correct and extensive. He is said to have principally directed all the military operations of General Beysser, under whom he served, without obtaining any share of the credit, or even being named. To paint his character in one word; he possessed many papers which might have served for his justification, but as they involved the safety of others, he forbore to produce them in his own defence. His patriotism expanded itself into

universal philanthropy, but one thing tho' a defect, must not be concealed; he wanted the firmness of Girey Duprè, for during his imprisonment, he wrote to Robespierre, to remind him that he had once saved his life. The tyrant took no notice of the letter, and he mildly submitted to his lot.

Duchâtel, tho' imprisoned and executed with the Brissotines, was hardly to be considered of their party; he was a member of the Constituent Assembly, but a decided Royalist, and did all in his power to save the life of the king, by voting for his banishment. He was sick at the time the trial begun, and having heard the turn the sentence was likely to take, he got out of his bed, and hastened to the Convention, to save, if possible, the life of the monarch. This was never forgiven him by the Jacobins, and on the 14th of June, 1793, a decree of accusation was issued against him, for having kept up a correspondence with the Royalists in La Vendée, and he was executed on the same scaffold with the Brissotines.—Riouffe has recorded his behaviour from the moment of his arrest to his execution, and every fact bespeaks the same noble and determined energy of mind, which he had shewn in the events above related.

Duchâtel

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Valazé

Valazé was the only one of the Brissotine party, who denied the tyrant the triumph of a public execution. On the whole he was not a character so amiable as many of his fellow-sufferers; in his conduct he was frequently actuated by pride and passion, rather than by solid and virtuous principles. There was in his manners and ideas a considerable portion of republican purity and simplicity, but it was rather the result of hatred to his superiors, than of benevolence or justice to those beneath him. In short, he was a republican more from passion than principle.—In the meetings that were held at his house by the members of the party, he discovered so much violence and extravagance, as to disgust the best intentioned persons among them, and prevent them giving their attendance any further; and even in prison, he carried his disputes with Vergniaud, in particular, to such a length, as to draw from that eloquent deputy, some expressions of contempt for his talents and intentions, which were far from being pleasant to their friends. He had, moreover, a species of keen, sarcastic irony, which disgusted most who conversed with him; yet he was, on the whole, an ardent and determined, but not an amiable character.

Adam Lux, tho' not a member of the Brissotine party, shared with them the sufferings of an unjust imprisonment and execution. As a native of Mentz, he had been deputed by that city to solicit a reunion to France; he was a man of the most pure and virtuous principles, tho' little acquainted with the world; and when he came to compare the refined notions he had formed in theory with the actual state of society, he was shocked at the horrid inconsistency; yet not intimidated from professing those principles of independent morality which yield to no temptation, and are not affrighted by any idea of danger, he expressed his virtuous indignation at the unworthy representatives of a free people, and gave full scope to the elevated sentiments with which he was inspired by the sublime self sacrifice of Charlotte Corday. The pamphlet in which he proposed a statue to be erected to her memory, with the inscription, "To a greater than Brutus," may be considered as the act of a man who was tired and disgusted with a degenerate world, and seemed to consider death as an honorable distinction in such unhappy times. Virtue could not have chosen a purer temple for her residence on earth than the heart of Adam Lux. He was a model of republican simplicity. Educated in

a. Lux

all the innocence of a country life, he united to the most profound and extensive knowledge, the utmost purity of manners and principles. All his ideas were centered in the promotion of virtue and happiness, and not one thought of base self-interest mingled with his pursuits; but his distinctive character was firmness, elevation, and dignity; there was nothing low or grovelling in his ideas, nothing weak or timid in his conduct; what he believed to be right, he followed with ceaseless perseverance, and was never to be diverted from his purpose by danger or difficulty; even death itself inspired him with no terrors, when duty interposed. His life was one constant act of benevolence, and his end was conformable to his conduct and sentiments.

Roland

Roland was a virtuous man, and a man of talents; it was his misfortune to take a part in public affairs when virtue was not only useless, but dangerous, and talents were of no avail; unless employed to commit crimes; he therefore fell a sacrifice to the cause of virtue, and only served to add another martyr to that list of proscription, which embraced the best names with which France was ever honored.

*Mad^{me}
Roland*

His wife not only towered above her own sex, but more than rivalled the other; she was,

in talents, and dignity of character, one of the first women that ever adorned the annals of history. If an idea of her mind was to be formed from her writings alone, we might safely pronounce her to be faultless, for, there indeed are to be found sentiments which tend to the highest improvement of our nature, expressed in language the most pure and animated. The love of learning, virtue, liberty, arts, beauty, nature, elegance, and refinement, shines in every page that she has left behind her; so that, for my own part, I heartily pronounce that there is hardly any thing in prose from which I have derived equal pleasure. She was ever the friend and adviser of her husband, she sought for no more power than she could obtain through him, and was, in all respects, such a wife as few literary men have the happiness to possess; not only the partner of his bed, but the companion of his social and literary hours; she shared in all his triumphs, and felt for all his injuries; his counsellor in all difficulties, and the sole instructress of his child; she sympathised with him in every thought and feeling, so that when he heard of her death, he no longer wished to continue in existence. No woman was more free from the vanity of her sex, for her mind was too much

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occupied with things of importance, to be amused with the trifles of dissipation. Her greatest pleasures were the beauties of nature, animated conversation, and the study of mankind. She avoided all places of public amusement, where nothing was to be gratified but an idle love of pleasure, tho' she was pleased with music and theatrical representations, when either were to be had in any degree of excellence. In mind she was elevated, by the most refined studies, beyond the common pitch of women; it is, therefore, not wonderful that she found few companions among her own sex, yet she never forgot the duties which nature and custom had imposed on her. As a mother, she excelled most others in attention to her daughter,⁷⁴ and as the mistress of a family, she never neglected any branch of that important trust, but regulated all concerns with the most systematic œconomy. The same exact disposition⁷⁵ of her time and affairs, she carried with her to a prison, where neatness and elegance were ever attended to, so far as the rigor of her persecutors would permit. Her music, her books, and her flowers, soothed and beguiled many a tedious hour, during five months of rigorous imprisonment; and when the last moments of her life approached, and she was

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commanded to prepare for execution, she got ready at the appointed instant, dressed as became the modesty of her sex, with elegant simplicity.—Her firmness never forsook her for a moment during all her sufferings, and on the scaffold, she paid a compliment to her executioner, which none but a Frenchwoman, and such a one as herself, could have conceived; her last words deplored the state of liberty, and she yielded to the fatal stroke without a sign or struggle of resistance. Having now presented the bright side of her character, it is but consistent with that impartiality which I wish on all occasions to preserve, that I should admit what may be said to her dispraise. That she conspired, with the rest of the Brisotines, against the king and the monarchy, there can be little doubt, and it will be somewhat difficult to defend her against such an accusation; all that can be said is, that her conduct affords a lamentable instance of the weakness and inconsistency of human nature. By much meditation on the vices and miseries of mankind, and the constant contemplation of theoretical excellence, she had exalted her mind to a pitch of enthusiasm, which rendered her blind to all the obstacles that lay between the conception, and the completion, of her

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beloved object, which she believed to be of such a nature, as to sanctify any means by which it could be realized, and thus in the search after an imaginary good, she produced much actual misery to herself and others, because neither she nor her party were provided with the means of accomplishing their purpose. Let their example be a lesson to all reformers of states, to be content with gradual and moderate improvements, such as are conformable to the progress of nature, rather than by aiming at visionary excellence, to hazard their own and the public safety.

La Source

La Source was a protestant minister from the province of Languedoc, a man of lively passions and warm imagination; in him the love of liberty was rather a feeling than a principle; it was therefore not to be wondered, that he was one of the most violent of his party. His detestation of the crimes which were committed in the name of liberty, so strongly excited his sensibility, that he used no disguise in expressing his sentiments, with that powerful and prevailing eloquence which naturally flows from a cultivated mind and a good heart, roused to indignation by successful villainy. A feeling disposition and elegant manners were the strongest traits in his character; he was

therefore a warm friend, and an agreeable companion, generally cheerful, and always sincere. He preserved the utmost gaiety during his imprisonment, and went to death, with the calm composure of an honest heart.

Duperret was one of the most moderate and *Dupe* steady friends of the Brissotine party; he was a plain, honest man, of no great talents, but firmly attached to the cause of liberty. He was born in the lower ranks of life, but had improved his mind by reflection and study; deliberate in his judgment, and firm in his resolves, he died with calm tranquillity.

The character of Robespierre is, with many *Robe* men, even now a subject of dispute; some consider him as a man of profound talents, and others only as a successful villain. His views and motives seem also to be doubtful, and what could be the designs of a man who employed his power only in shedding human blood, is a problem which can only be solved by a more accurate knowledge of his private character, than any thing hitherto published can enable us to determine. His disposition, from his earliest youth, was dark, gloomy, and revengeful, jealous of the superiority of others, impatient of restraint, which some men mistook for the love of liberty, tyrann

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nical to his inferiors, and to those above him, proud, distant, and disrespectful. He had nourished his mind, in his early years, with the study of the greatest characters in the ancient republics, but the lessons he received from them became soured, in passing through his acrimonious heart. He gloried in reading their resistance of oppression, but with him it became only a hatred of submission; he mistook the lust of power for the love of liberty. He was naturally cautious, subtle, and reserved, and never gave the slightest indication of his intentions, till he was ready to accomplish his purpose. The love of power was his great and predominant passion; to acquire and maintain this he sacrificed every other consideration; no human ties were binding with him, if they laid any restraint on his ambition. He did not, like Cæsar or Cromwell, arrive at power by a series of bold and desperate actions; he rose by slow and gentle degrees in the opinion of the people, by professions of regard for their interest, and a hatred of the great. He courted the multitude by every species of flattery, and he obtained their esteem by an appearance of honesty, for which they gave him credit, because he was superior to the temptations of interest or luxury. The simplicity of his man-

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⁷⁸ners, his aversion to splendor, his humble fare and homely dwelling, all gave countenance to their belief of those simple virtues which are essential to republican states, and which had been so eloquently painted by Helvetius and Rousseau. He humoured the taste of the mob, and he rose to power by their favor, and had he not sought afterwards, to govern by terror rather than opinion, he might have remained to this moment the first officer of a great republic, but his talents were limited; he saw no more than one thing at a time. His views were not extensive, he had no ideas beyond those of force or fraud. There was nothing great, noble, or generous in his conceptions, and when he had accomplished his purpose, he knew not how to employ his power. The great, the learned, and the virtuous, were his enemies, and he saw no method of silencing their opposition, but force; and, that engine which he employed to preserve his authority, proved the instrument of his destruction. It was natural that it should be so, for no man can expect to govern a country long, after he has reduced himself to a mere trial of strength with the people, which shall last longest.

The republic which Robespierre aimed to establish, was impracticable in the nature of

things, and is a proof that he had no talents but for popular eloquence; it was the republic of Jack Cade,⁷⁹ where all were to be equal, and he was to be their king. Could there be a stronger proof of his ignorance in the art of government? He caught the favorable opportunity for obtaining power, but he wanted the talents to preserve it. The people were the dupes of his canting professions, and the victims of his stupid tyranny. He encountered no difficulties, but found every thing prepared for him, by the recent dissolution of a great monarchy. Power was the reward of the most daring and wicked, and he obtained it by that claim. To love, to friendship, and to pity, his heart was equally a stranger.⁸⁰ One great passion swallowed up every other; all his thoughts and actions were bent on the means of acquiring and preserving power; he had a happy talent for discerning who were likely to be useful to him, and as soon as he had obtained his purpose, they were no longer his friends, but his rivals. In the first he shewed his judgment, but in the last, his extreme weakness, for it proved in the end his destruction; and those who had been his tools and agents, destroyed him not out of regard for the public good, but their own safety. His views were

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79 Under Henry VI part 2

81 among these the first were Fretton and Tullin, men covered with blood & crime.

narrow, and his means were few and contemptible.

One thing may be urged in his favor, and it would be hard to suppress the truth, when so little can be said in his praise. At the time when he came into power, France was likely to be torn in pieces by different parties; he suppressed them all, and by the force of terror, (a dreadful instrument!) united them as one man, and enabled them to repel their external enemies with triumph; he converted the nation into a great magazine;⁸² he did every thing to interest the people in the defence of their country; he compelled the rich to contribute with all their means, and suffered no hand to be idle in the moment of general danger. It must be remembered also, that the law which protects literary property was passed during his administration, and the formation of the National Institute commenced at the same period; but when we have said this, we must cease to speak in his praise, for every other measure of his government deserves to be branded with infamy.⁸³

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Danton was a man of strong mind and strong body; the latter was the index of the former. After the destruction of the Brissotines, no man bid fairer to be the Cromwell of France than

Danton.

Danton; but Robespierre over-reached him; he was employed by him while he could be of any use, but the moment he began to be dangerous, he was sent to the scaffold.—Danton, tho' fierce, cruel, and undaunted, had yet some sentiments of pity, and tho' he had steeped far in blood, he thought it safer to stop than to proceed; but he suffered for his mistake; his death secured the power, and hastened the fate of Robespierre.

Danton appears to have been hurried, by the excesses of the revolution, into many acts of violence and cruelty, which in cooler moments he abhorred. He was not, like Robespierre, naturally savage, for tho' coarse in his appearance and manner, he had many traits of goodness about him; he was generous, friendly to those he esteemed, and open in all his attacks; he was a man of genius, grand in his conceptions, and bold in the execution of them; he had no talent for oratory, nor any respect for those who had, which is not to be wondered at, for he said more in a few words, than others could do in long and labored harangues. Under the monarchy, every place was occupied, and no room was left for his ambition. To gratify this passion, he voted for a republic, and in one moment the oldest monarchy in

Europe was effaced. He was too bold, too indolent, and too violent, to wait for the lazy process of time, to accomplish what his ambition or his inclination prompted him to desire; but 'tho' he had the power to create, he wanted the means to preserve, either his own life or the republic, for they both fell a sacrifice to a craftier villain than himself, and they live now only in remembrance. In Robespierre every thing was little, except his ambition and cruelty. In Danton every thing was great; he sought for nothing by little and crooked means; he never disguised his designs; when Robespierre courted the people, he commanded them. He was one of those great geniuses who can excel in any thing, but, unfortunately, he was so impregnated with revolutionary principles that, instead of endeavoring patiently to enlighten mankind, by reason and argument, and to build upon the old foundations, he bore down every thing before him with unprincipled violence, and tore up society by the roots, rather than wait for the tardy fruit of time and philosophy. But, in fact, he was no philosopher; he was a boisterous demagogue, who, with liberty, equality, and happiness on his lips, had only ambition and vengeance in his heart; he had some good qualities, and

many great ones, which redeem him from total infamy; he was one of those bold, bad men, who, tho' they sometimes eventually serve the cause of liberty, yet, in general, do more to destroy than to promote the happiness of society.—A short time before his death, Garat, who had been formerly acquainted with him, conceived the hope of attaching him to the cause of humanity, and in becoming the mediator between the two parties, of organizing the republic on principles of moderation and equity. Danton gladly embraced the opportunity, and seemed to sigh only for the return of tranquillity; but it was too late, for his inhuman foe perceived the tendency of his conduct, and punished by death, his virtuous apostacy.—The particulars of the design, and means of execution, are detailed by Garat, and may be considered as some atonement for his former guilt. ^{ss} ^{ss}

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Duc
d'Orleans

The character of the Duke of Orleans, who nicknamed himself *Egalite*, is too generally known and detested, to need much illustration, yet a few particulars of his life may serve to make the baseness of his conduct more evident, and expose him still further to that contempt which all villains deserve. A royalist writer, too strongly prejudiced against him to deserve

(86) The reply of Danton on his Trial, when asked his name & residence deserves to be remembered
"my residence (I d'he.) will soon be in non-entity, but my name will live in the pantheon of History"

much credit⁸⁷, has employed three volumes to prove the existence of a conspiracy which nobody doubts, for a purpose which nobody believes. Orleans was, in all respects, the most contemptible and detestable character that figured in the revolution; bred in all the vice and luxury of a court, he put to shame even his princely companions, by the grossness and filthiness of his debauchery, and exceeded even his infamous ancestor of libidinous celebrity⁸⁸.—His democracy was not the result of patriotism, but of the insults and disappointments he had received from his royal relations; they knew him, and detested him, and he determined on revenge. He was a convenient instrument for intriguing politicians, and Mirabeau, Sieyès, and La Clos, made their own use of him; he became, however, after he had ceased to be the tool of a party, the dupe of his own villainy. His aim was, no doubt, in all his movements, open, and secret, to overturn the throne, but that there was a conspiracy to place him on another, no evidence has yet been produced. It is sufficient guilt to have subverted the monarchy, without one honest or liberal motive. He can hardly be described under any distinctive character, but that of vice and profligacy; he was not entirely with-

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*M. Montjoye, author of the Hist. of the Orleans & the Panegyric of Louis XVI
Vide "Œuvres posthumes de Marmontel"; "M. de Riche lieu"; & "Vie privée de Louis XV anacot. of the Regent Duc d'Orleans."*

out talents, and such accomplishments as with princes are indispensable, nor wholly without virtues, for he was kind and compassionate to the wretched, and gentle towards his friends and family; he took no delight in the bloody excesses of the revolution, but a foolish love of popularity, and a constant desire of novelty and pleasure, were his prevailing passions, which he was never restrained from gratifying, by any regard to honor or principle. He is reported to have been accessory to the death of his brother-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre, by keeping him in a continual course of debauchery, for at the young man's death, his wife became heiress to his immense possessions.

The famous committee of Mont Rouge^{9^a}, about which M. Bertrand has said so much, was certainly never convened for the purpose he insinuates, that of deposing the king, to make Orleans lieutenant-general, and afterwards monarch; not one single fact corroborates the idea. That a committee did meet under his auspices, and that they used him as their tool, for exciting insurrection and limiting the power of the crown, there can be no doubt; but the tales which have been told under any other supposition, are so devoid of consistency and probability, as to be totally unworthy of

(90) voir Bert. de Molléville vol 4 p 13.

credit.—One story pretends that he was to demand an audience of the king; in which he was to offer his mediation between the court and the people, on condition of being appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom; that he went as was settled, and when he got to the door of the king's chamber, he met the Baron de Breteuil coming from thence, and asked him if he might speak with the king; to which he was answered, that it was impossible, but if he wished to say any thing particular, he might write to his majesty. "Unless," says the minister, "you wish rather to write your demands to me, and I will lay the letter before the king." He preferred the latter method,—(very likely indeed!)—but durst not say a word about being lieutenant-general;—(what! not by letter?)—and merely contented himself with intreating his majesty's permission to take a voyage to England, if public affairs should take an unfavorable turn in France. That he and his party had a share in the proceedings of the 5th and 6th of October by sending the mob from Paris to Versailles, there can be little doubt; for the money of Orleans[?] was at all times profusely spread among the people, to gain him popularity, and to render the royal family odious.

There can be little doubt of this after the publication of the proceedings of the Chal.

The waywardness and irregularity of his youth are strongly pictured by his cousin, the natural daughter of the Prince of Conti, in her interesting memoirs. Their fathers used frequently to sympathise with each other on public and private distresses, the misery of the people, and the profligacy of their sons, the sufferings of the nation, and the wretchedness of their families; for they were patriots from pure benevolence, and kind fathers from tenderness of feeling. "The father of the Duke de Chartres," say she, "since called Citizen Egalité, had always some new and scandalous anecdote to recount of his son, in opposition to the hopes and consolations that the Prince of Conti wished to give him."—Having once in vain entreated his uncle to intercede for him, "he came," says this amiable princess, in the greatest distress to me, and begged me to interpose in his favor; adding, that nothing else could save him from being eternally banished the presence of his father, and that his vivacity, and not his heart, was in fault. I immediately entreated the Prince of Conti to take me with him to the Temple, which was then the residence of the Duke d'Orleans, and permit me to intercede for the prince my cousin. He smiled at my proposal, but my oratory sub-

92.82
63.

ceeded. The Duke de Chartres shewed himself sensible of my kindness, and overpowered me with expressions of gratitude; and he once afterwards recalled this anecdote to my memory." His father was reconciled to him for a time, and he appeared to be more sober and prudent, yet he neither changed his company nor his conduct. To his eternal shame and infamy, he afterwards treated this unfortunate lady, in the zenith of his popularity, with neglect and indifference. His correspondence, which has lately been published with every mark of authenticity, proves, that in his journey to England, he was the dupe of his ambition. The court had begun to dread his popularity and intrigues at home, and they sent him here to amuse him with the idea of becoming sovereign of Belgium, in case England and Prussia should have any design of favoring the patriots there, and taking it out of the hands of the emperor. He at last saw through the artifice, and immediately solicited his recal.

Tho' violent and resentful, Orleans does not appear to have been naturally cruel; he had a great regard for his children, and took the utmost care of their education, and tho' he differed on that subject from his wife, who was a

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violent bigot, he always treated her respectfully and civilly. His voting for the death of Louis was to be considered as a last attempt to rally a party which he found were deserting him, but it had the contrary effect, and only hastened his destiny. The editor of the correspondence confesses that he had the barbarous curiosity to see him go to execution, and was surprised at his firmness and composure. The rest who were in the cart with him, held down their heads in the utmost confusion and distress, but he alone appeared erect and undaunted, and when the cart stopped, opposite to that famous palace⁹³ which had been once his residence, and in which he had rivalled even Trimalchio⁹⁴ and the monks of Medmenham in the extremes of grossness and refinement, he surveyed it with the air of one who was looking about to make alterations and repairs. Such indifference at such a time is hardly to be accounted for, but it is proved by the strongest evidence.⁹⁶

Having now described the first performers in the great drama of the French revolution, and the most bloody hero in the tragedy, I will finish this subject, by giving an account of his principal agents; for had he not met with men in all respects suited to his purpose, he never

(94) *vide petronius arbiter*

(95) *vide advert. of a Guinea by*

Charles Johnstone, where the act. of a

famous fraternity is now actg. correctly given

(96) *By the Editor of the correspondence, and*
by all the newspapers, then published

could have occasioned such extensive mischief, nor so completely have silenced the popular voice. The Talliens, the Frérons, and the Heberts, were aptly chosen as the instruments of his cruelty, for they never left his commands unfinished, but seemed even to overact their parts. To describe them all would be but a gloomy repetition of villany and cruelty; yet there are two who seem to be so far distinguished from the rest, as to deserve particular notice, and these are Fouquier Tainville, his *F Tainville* attorney-general or public accuser, and the bloody Samson, his executioner, for such he was in more senses than one. Tainville was no mean and cowardly villain, he never affected moderation and candor, nor appealed to heaven for the purity of his intentions; his purpose was murder, and he had no hesitation about the means. He was not restrained by any law or precedent, and what he "wished highly he never wished holily," like the half formed villainy of Macbeth. Except the mere pleasure of having the lives of his fellow creatures in his power, it is difficult to say what was his motive. To be sure he was well paid for his performance, and lived better than he had ever been used to, and some men will do any thing for that. He seems to have been little trou-

bled with the alarms of conscience; it is no wonder, therefore, that he never once relented in the hottest moments of his bloody trade.— Nay, he even exceeded his commission, for on that day which saw Robespierre deposed, he sent four-and-forty victims to the scaffold, and when some one remonstrated with him, (at the same time mentioning the fall of the tyrant) he answered with cool indifference, “That’s no matter, the law must have its course.”—At other times, he called for condemnation on persons whom he had neither seen nor known; and at one time sent above eighty before the tribunal, where, without further ceremony, he said to the jury, “I suppose you are sufficiently convinced that these men are guilty.” Without hesitation, they declared their consciences to be satisfied, and sent them in gross to the guillotine. He used constantly to frequent a coffee-house near the palace of justice, and on being asked the number of heads that had fallen during the decade, he replied, “How much do you think I have gained for the republic?” meaning the property of those who had suffered. They answered, perhaps so many thousands. “Yes,” says he, “more; and next decade I’ll cut off three or four hundred more heads!”

Among those accused in one great batch, there happened to be an old man, whose tongue being palsied, prevented him from speaking; Tainville being told the cause of his silence, "O, no matter," says he, "it is the head we want, not the tongue." This was coarse and cruel pleasantry.—During the whole of his own trial, he shewed the greatest coolness and presence of mind. When he was brought before the very tribunal where he had sent so many to death, he kept writing the whole time, yet he was all eyes and all ears, for he lost not a word that was said, either by the president, the jury, the witnesses, his accomplices, or the public accuser. While the latter was summing up the evidence, he pretended to be asleep, and when he came to his defence, he drew down his large black eyebrows, and frowned with indignation. It was impossible for human ingenuity to say more in his exculpation, to alter facts with greater address, or to go nearer to prove an *alibi*: he denied his own hand writing, and never shewed the least mark of fear, when the strongest evidence was produced against him.

While he was going to execution, his face of marble seemed to defy the insults of the populace. He even smiled, while uttering the most

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insolent threats; for an instant while he was mounting the scaffold, he betrayed some signs of trepidation and repentance; but they were momentary. His look was keen and penetrating, his hair black, his face short, pale, and much marked with the small-pox, his size about the middle, but his limbs strong, and his eyes small and round. His character seems to have been that of a man neither refined by education, nor softened by morality, of strong parts, great vices, cruel, savage, and implacable.

Samson

Voltaire has remarked, that the history of England should be written by the hangman. Mercier says, the history of the French revolution should be written by Samson the executioner, and surely no man so proper to relate the number of victims who suffered in Paris, for all they fell by his hands. With the same undisturbed gravity of countenance, and the same mechanical insensibility of feelings, he cut off the head of the most powerful monarch in Europe, of his wife and sister, of Brissot, Couthon, and Robespierre, of princes, legislators, plebeians, and philosophers; of all ages, sexes, and parties; of honest men, fools, and rogues; with the same *sang froid* he murdered virtue, beauty, innocence, as he did

vice and villany. All were alike to him; his conscience and his sleep was never for a moment disturbed; he eat his dinner, drank his bottle, and went to the play in the evening, as if nothing had happened.

Great are the advantages to be derived from the study of characters. The first, is to guard us against the arts and the frauds of designing men. The next is, by adiligent attention to the vices and virtues of others, to form our own minds and conduct on principles of virtue and honor; to see the ridiculous light in which the follies of others are held by the world; to consider the effects of virtue on the happiness of society and individuals; and to be satisfied, that, tho' force and fraud, may triumph for a time, yet that nothing is permanent, but truth, justice, and honesty.

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*note note p. 376.

Homo sum; humani nihil, a me alienum.

TER.



*The excellence
of Sensibility
i.e. feeling
heart*

THE tear of sensibility, in the rough language of the Roman satirist, is the best part of our nature, and certainly nothing renders a man so amiable, as strong feelings either of pain or pleasure; other qualities may make him great or respectable, but a feeling heart can alone make him beloved, can alone give him a claim to be called a good man. To be dead to the charms of nature and art, to the tender emotions of affection and pity, or to the lively sensations of sympathy, is to live in a state of moral torpor, which deprives us of half the pleasures of existence, and the most enviable privilege of human beings. All people feel for themselves, but few feel for others, therefore he who takes the greatest interest in the pains or happiness of his fellow-creatures, most

deserves their esteem, and he who feels the least, excites in proportion their pity or contempt. In a world so full of misery as that in which (for wise purposes no doubt) we are placed, he must have a callous heart who does not often meet with occasions to call forth his compassion and sympathy. To feel for, and relieve, the distresses of those to whom we are most nearly related by the ties of connection or blood, is not merely a duty, but a necessity from which we can scarcely be acquitted, except by some very peculiar circumstances. To feel for, and relieve, the distresses of those who are out of the line of our acquaintance or connections, is a duty which we owe to each other, on account of our common nature, and as members of the same society; yet it is a duty not merely neglected, but seldom thought of, for even those who have it most in their power, do not often move out of their own sphere, to seek for and relieve distress. If they perform the common offices of kindness to their friends, and pay the rates which are levied for the poor, they think themselves not only just, but generous, and if their benevolence is solicited for any thing further, they answer that taxes are high, and the poor are well provided for; they hug themselves in their own comforts,

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*The
Judgment
Should
Regulate
Compassion*

and turn a deaf ear to the sufferings of others.

To act on all occasions from the immediate impulse of compassion, will frequently expose us to ridicule, and sometimes to serious inconvenience. To give way to the more violent feelings upon all occasions will produce caprice, inconsistency and cruelty, and deprive us of all merit as accountable agents, for no man can deserve great praise for his conduct who acts more from feeling than principle. Feeling without judgment, is melody without harmony, and judgment without feeling, is harmony without melody. The world is too full of misery and deceit, to make it safe for any man to be guided solely by his feelings; for he who listens to every tale of woe, without stopping to examine whether it is true or false, and even he who attempts to relieve actual distress, whenever it is presented to him, will himself, in time, become an object of relief. Let not this warning, however, tend in any degree to deaden our feelings for worthy objects and occasions; they will be sufficiently numerous to employ both our hearts and our hands, if we are willing to exert them under proper regulations; but let us by no means ever give way to their irregular exercise, or to affectation and vanity, for nothing is so disgusting as the

whine of tenderness, the mere cant of feeling, the parade of sympathy; they bring the best part of our nature into disrepute, and prevent many a man from being generous, lest he should be thought ridiculous. Men of true feeling talk the least about it; they shew it by their actions, while those who wish to be thought what they are not, endeavor to impose upon others by mere words; but, in fact, they only deceive themselves, for occasions must perpetually arise where their conduct will give the lie to their professions.

To lament the departure or the loss of our friends is a feeling so natural and amiable, as *on the loss of Friends* hardly to be capable of being indulged to excess; yet when it injures our health, destroys our happiness, or interferes with our duty to those who remain behind, it has then exceeded its proper bounds, and ought to be restrained; but these limits are not to be prescribed by vulgar minds, for they cannot judge at what point the indulgence of our feelings is to be stopped, nor how far men of tender sensibility may be allowed to proceed, before they have given that full expression to their sorrow, which nature seems to require. To check these effusions of grief by the cold suggestions of prudence, only irritates us the more, for

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nothing but the reason of the sufferer, or the diversion of the mind to other thoughts and objects, can gently soothe and wear out that affliction, which those who do not feel, in vain attempt to console.

eternal affection is not to be carried into extremes The feelings of affection for our children and relatives seem to be of so amiable a nature, as hardly to need any restraint; yet, experience, both with regard to ourselves and others, convinces us, that even these may be dangerous, when indulged to excess. The parent who listens to nothing but the perpetual suggestions of tenderness towards his children, will soon find that he has been fatally mistaken, and if he forbears to speak in the language of severity or contradiction, when the weakness of childish desires demands what is dangerous or improper, he will soon repent of his delicate feelings, and find that what was meant in kindness turns out to be cruelty. The perpetual repetition of indulgence, forms a temper of expectation, impatience, and peevishness under disappointment, which can never be corrected, even by time and experience, for custom is so much stronger than reason, that what we have been long used to, we do not perceive to be wrong.

anxiety of parents ought to be well regulated. Tho' no parent, possessed of the common feelings of our nature, can avoid being anxious

for the welfare and happiness of his family, yet there are some men whose anxiety keeps them in a perpetual state of agitation; they can hardly bear to part with their children out of their sight, when young, and even when older, when their education or employments take them from home, the fond parent remains in a state of constant anxiety. The moment of parting is an agony next to death, and the state of separation is attended with perpetual alarms. He expects to hear from them with watchful impatience, and is ever tremblingly alive to all that concerns their success, their honor, their comfort, their happiness, and their improvement. Such a state of feeling, tho' produced by the most amiable motives, is not only painful, but little short of ridiculous; yet the world will bear me witness that is not uncommon. There are many parents who consult nothing but their feelings in all that regards their children; whatever they wish for, they give them, wherever they wish to go, they are permitted, and nothing short of positive evil is forbidden or denied. The natural consequence of all this is, that the feelings of the parent by being at first complied with, are afterwards perpetually tormented; for children who are early and constantly indulged, are

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strangers to that very delicacy of feeling which is the cause of their ruin; because having experienced no difficulties, they know not how to appreciate the value of that which they acquire by mere impatience, and in return for the mistaken tenderness with which they have been treated, they frequently treat their too indulgent parents, with harshness and contempt. Such children are generally hard-hearted towards their equals and companions, for being accustomed to constant compliance with all that they demand, they resent the slightest contradiction, with that violence which is natural to those who have never known restraint.

*Feelings of
aversion to
in offspring
unsurmountable*

The feelings of aversion and dislike towards their children, are, in some parents, as strong as those of partiality in others. The latter, tho' more blameable in the parent, are often not so injurious to the child; yet whoever is actuated solely by his feelings, whether tender or violent, will be generally in the wrong. Affection may be felt for those to whom we have naturally no relation, and it is the best bond of friendship, for cold esteem can never supply the place of love, nor can we ever take a lively interest in the concerns of those for whom we feel not a regard as ardent as the warmest affection can

dictate; without affection there can be no friendship.

The feelings of tenderness, and regard for our friends and relatives, form the most amiable part of our nature, and nothing can impress the world with a more favorable opinion of any man's character, than his kindness to his nearest connections. Some there are, indeed, so dull, so cold, so selfish, so hardened, and so impenetrable, as to have little claim to our regard, and if we pay them respect, it is all they are entitled to; but to be devoid of feeling toward those who deserve it, is to write our own condemnation, and bear about with us a sentence of excommunication from all virtuous and refined society. Yet, tho' we ought to feel for our friends every sentiment of tenderness and affection, we are not to take it for certain that they are at all times right, nor defend them at all hazards. Tho' we should feel for their injuries, we should always reprove their offences; and tho' we ought to take a lively interest in all that concerns their welfare, we should not therefore be guilty of injustice to others, nor attempt to depreciate their rivals or competitors. The feelings of affection and friendship are not superior to the claims of justice, or the dictates of prudence.

*Regard
for our
Friends
one of the
most laudable
virtues*

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*The Source
of parting
with Friends
ought not
to be destroyed
but restrained*

The tender emotions of sorrow or regret which we feel at parting with those who are most dear to us, tho' they cannot, and ought not to be destroyed, may be restrained, when they affect our happiness or disturb our repose. Yet it is difficult to banish the tender remembrance of past pleasures, and to forget those who have enlivened us by their good humour, soothed us by their gentleness; or improved us by their sage admonitions. Such friends, every hour must recal to our memory, and if death has torn them from us for ever, tho' we should not, like the poet, refuse to set bounds to our grief, we at least may be permitted to lament that they no longer continue to enliven our existence, and to remember with gratitude those happy moments whose loss we never can cease to deplore. Should distance only have removed them from our sight, hope may alleviate the pains of separation, and soften those feelings which it is impossible in tender minds entirely to suppress; and yet to bear the being parted from those whom we regard with virtuous affection, and cherish with sincere esteem, requires a degree of fortitude which time and reason can alone afford.

*Pity, tho
amiable
often subjects
us to ridicule*

The feelings of pity are, of all others, the most amiable, yet such is the cruelty of the

*Quis desidero sit pudor aut modis
Tam chari capitis? Horace, od. lib. 1*

world, that, when indulged in to excess, they expose us to the most ridicule and contempt.— The idea of weakness is always attached to the man who is subject to the overflowings of compassion, because the distress which excites those emotions is so easily counterfeited, that those who are not constantly on their guard, are liable to be imposed on by artful pretenders; and nothing can render us so contemptible in the eyes of the world, as being deceived even by plausible pretences, for it bespeaks a want of judgment, which the world is always disposed to laugh at or condemn.

Our pity may be excited by a variety of objects, but those of bodily pain or want most forcibly press upon our notice; these are obvious to every eye, and from every hand that possesses the means, they claim immediate and substantial relief, while the wants, the pains, and distresses of the mind can be known only to those who are more nearly acquainted with the sufferers, and these it is not in every man's power to alleviate. Ignorance, when arising from poverty, can only be removed by the means which are applied to bodily wants, and distress can only be soothed by the tenderest attentions. To commiserate the suffering part of mankind, in every clime and country, is not

*Bodily
a strike
subject
sympa.
in pro
life*

The feelings

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merely a feeling, but a duty. Humane and tender minds are irresistibly impelled to it, if they are cultivated by knowledge, and expanded by philanthropy: yet what we pity, it is not always in our power to relieve. Pecuniary aid can be imparted to few, the efforts of the mind may be extended to all. Whether it is the duty of him who feels for the distresses of his fellow-creatures to use every moral means for their relief, has been doubted by those who restrain their benevolence to the objects which come immediately under their notice. In every rank and department of life, there are many that excite our pity, who are not within the power of our relief; there are many, who, tho' subject to no bodily wants, nor to any particular distress of mind, are yet to be pitied for their ignorance, their privations, and their deficiency of mental resources. Yet far be it from me to render any one unhappy by ideal grievances, or to suggest to them the wants which they do not feel; for they are in no need of pity who are content, tho' their happiness is limited within narrow bounds. To make those unhappy who have all they wish for, by urging them to seek for more, is not kindness, but cruelty; yet ignorance to a certain point is misery, and they who have no

knowledge of their rights and duties as members of society, are in the lowest state of ignorance. Beyond this, all our knowledge is superfluous, and by no means essential to happiness, or even to comfort.

The feelings of pity which are excited by private distress, may be equally extended to the distresses of a whole people, and he must have a callous heart, who does not sympathize with the sufferings of oppressed and injured nations. To hear of the defeat and misery of those who are struggling to be free; who feel their degraded state, and yet are unsuccessful in their attempts to improve it, and who finally are compelled to yield to the sword of the oppressor, must excite in every feeling heart the liveliest emotions of pity and regret; but to be an eye witness of the desolation and slavery of oppressed countries, is almost too great a trial for men of refined sensibility.

Who that is endowed with common sensibility, can forbear to commiserate the lot of those unhappy females, who, with small fortunes and disgusting persons, have been neglected by man, and seem almost abandoned by heaven, who are, as the poet describes them,

*Sympathy
for public
distresses*

*For plain
unmarried
females.*

"Young, without lovers; old, without a friend!—"

who are above the wants of poverty, yet without the indulgences of wealth, whose early education has left their minds unimproved, and whose tempers have been soured by disappointment. Some of them, indeed, there are, who are good natured, cheerful, and resigned, and are comfortable without much enjoyment; but others among them find their only happiness, in envy, detraction, and calumny, who are gratuitously wicked, and delight in mischief for mischief's sake. It is from such people we form our ideas of the devil. Yet even these deserve our pity, for they are what they are, not by their own fault or choice, but by that unfortunate lot which has denied to them, what others more abundantly enjoy. There are some in whom beauty has not been able to supply the want of fortune, and others to whom nature has been less kind, yet all have a claim to our pity for having failed to obtain the most enviable rank which women can hold in society.

*For the
rendless
& infirm*

The sorrows of the fatherless, the friendless, and the aged, at all times demand our pity and relief; but there are cases which call more particularly for our interference. When the loss of parents or friends is aggravated by poverty, or by the cruelty and oppression of

the inhuman, no good man can hold himself excused from exerting every means in his power to redress their wrongs, and relieve their distresses, and when the danger of vice is added to all their other misfortunes, it becomes a duty of morality, rather than an impulse of feeling, to preserve them from ruin and from death, for the enemy of vice is the benefactor of society. The feebleness of old age, even in its best state of comfort, cannot fail to excite our pity, and, when not rendered contemptible by vice or folly, demands our respect. No feelings of detestation, therefore, can be sufficiently strong towards those who neglect, in their declining years, their parents, and benefactors, and still more towards those who make the weakness and deformities of this helpless state, the subject of mockery or insult. Superstition and ignorance might be added to the list of the means by which the tender feelings are destroyed; and the vulgar, who labor under both, are generally coarse and cruel; in proportion as these evils are corrected by the progress of reason and information, they become affectionate and tender. In former times it is hardly credible how much many poor old women suffered from the reputation of being witches; ¹⁰⁰ they were dragged through horse-

ry "Hard luck slack ^{y 2} when poorly & ill d,
 "weeds out of Fashion & a lonely field,
 "twi' a sma' cast of miles sh? in a twitch
 "Gie'ane the hatefu' name, o' wrinkled Toth
 (allan Ran

Whether
mendacity
shd be

relieve, is the lesson of scripture and morality.

The feelings of the public are often very strongly excited, both in the country, and in towns, by the exposition or the pretence of poverty and distress; yet, it is a question with many great moralists, Whether common beggars ought to be relieved? I should decide to the contrary; for tho' it should happen that actual misery may by that means be sometimes neglected, yet the general consequences of giving such relief are so dangerous, that, for the sake of the principle, we ought rather to get the better of our first feelings, than increase an evil which is already too extensive.

In a well regulated country there should be no beggars, and was every one, according to his ability, to relieve the distress which immediately surrounds him, there could be none, even in the present unequal division of things, and with a more extensive population. To those who give no other alms, I should recommend to relieve beggars, for by that means, they may chance to do some good, tho' possibly some evil. I only condemn the general principle; but they who are used to employ the means of relieving distress which fortune has put in their power, by seeking for the wretched within the sphere of their inter-

101 "A Common Beggar, (says Col Symes) is no where to be seen in the Birman Empire; Every individual is certain of pec. of sustenance which if he cannot procure by his own labour is provided for him by others. (Emb. to Asia)

course, will certainly misemploy their money by giving any part of it to impudent mendicity.

The emotions of pity cannot always be re-^{spontaneous} strained by the cold maxims of prudence, nor ^{emotions} is it right that they should. The sight of distress strikes so irresistibly to the heart, that ^{of pity & compassion} men of strong feelings have no time to consider their own safety, at the idea of a fellow-creature in danger, and many a human being has been spared to the world and to his friends, by a sudden impulse of feeling in some benevolent spectator, who has risked his own life to save that of another. Instances, however, frequently arise, ¹⁰² where, in the execution of our duty to society, the feelings of pity to individuals must be suppressed, and mercy must give place to justice; yet it by no means from thence ensues, that men in public stations should banish from their breasts all feeling and commiseration for the sufferings of mankind, and it would tend much to diminish the miseries of the world, if those on whom the destinies of nations and individuals so often depend, were possessed of more tender feelings, or did not suffer their genuine emotions of pity to be so frequently destroyed. We should not then have thousands slaughtered for the sport or obstinacy of an individual, nor

^{102 note}
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their friends and relatives reduced to distress, for the mistakes, the ignorance, or the ambition of a minister. Did they who dispose of the lives and happiness of their fellow-creatures by the mere breath of their mouth, or the dash of a pen, ever witness the destruction they occasion; did they hear the cries and groans of the dying, the distress of their relatives, the miserable widows of murdered soldiers wandering for many hundred miles with their helpless infants; did they see those sights, and were not totally steeled against compassion, perhaps they might pause before they signed the dreadful death warrant, to reflect on the justice of their cause, which can never be complete till the means of conciliation have been exhausted.

*Pity sh^d
not supersede
other
considerations*

Whenever pity is suffered to take place of every other consideration, it will, in many cases, lead us into difficulties and improprieties; it will create other feelings than those which were at first excited, and weaken our resolution where it is most required, It has often been remarked, that pity melts the mind to love; but without the direction of prudence, it is in danger of an improper choice. The greatest of dramatic poets has taken this for the groundwork in one of his finest tragedies, and repre-

sented Desdemona, in her attachment to Othello, to have been led on from pity to love.—1

“ She loved me for the dangers I had past;
 “ And I loved her that she did pity them.”

The progress is natural, and admirably conceived.

The feelings of pity are those which, of all others, are most frequently excited, and, when exercised with judgment, are the most extensively useful; they tend above all others to lighten the calamities of the world, to teach us to bear one another's burdens, and to divide the general load of human misery, for there is no situation in which a man can be entirely exempt from the pity of his fellow-creatures, nor entirely above their power to relieve.—Even the great are not removed from suffering, nor are the poorest beneath notice, and pity is due even to the profligate and abandoned, whether successful in their vices, or sufferers, neglected and despised. But here our pity may sometimes be carried to excess, when the wicked are relieved, without any consideration of their crimes, and the profligate spendthrift, and the ruined gamester, are fostered with the same commiseration, as the unfortunate, innocent victim of mischance or villainy.

*The feeling
most of
not*

The Feelings

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*Sensibility
in excess,
ceases to be
estimable*

Whenever the violence of our feelings for the distressed so far overcomes our active powers, as to disable us from giving that relief which reason and humanity demand, sensibility then ceases to be an estimable quality, and becomes an injury both to ourselves and others; for the mere feelings, of compassion, if they are never matured into action, are of no more service to our fellow-creatures than the gold which lies hid in the mines of Potosi. Yet, in some men, the affectation of feeling is mistaken for true sensibility. It is easy, however, to distinguish the gold from the dross, for they who are possessed of the genuine sympathies of pity, never fail to relieve, as far as they are able, the distresses they deplore; while they who only affect to be tender-hearted, will shun the objects they ought to turn to with kind solicitude, and, in conversation, they will whine for a few minutes over a tale of woe, and then fly to some other subject with hasty indifference. Others there are, who, tho' possessed of feelings, are yet unwilling to exercise them, lest they should clash with some favorite interest, lest they should induce a call upon their purse, or require their active interference; these men behold, or listen to, for a while, the sufferings of their fellow-creatures with tender-

ness and sensibility, but finding their feelings become too powerful to be any longer trusted, make their retreat in time, and turn to some object either more pleasing to them, or totally indifferent, while they sooth their consciences, and save their characters by the plea of inability, and the number of the distressed. The world applauds them for their resolution, and receives them with the triumph due to those who have overcome their enemies, while, with sardonic sneer, it smiles at the weakness of those who comply with their feelings, even without injury to their fortune or comfort.

Those who are most remarkable for the expression of feeling in their writings and conversation, do not always shew the same degree of sensibility in their conduct, and it would be easy to produce many instances, both of dead and living authors, who have expressed the most glowing ardor of compassion, without ever performing a tender or generous action; in common life, their feelings evaporate, and, like the generality of the world, they are cold, selfish, and sordid.

The emotions of joy, tho' violent, are short and transitory, subsiding by degrees into calm satisfaction, yet they are, of all our other feelings, the most difficult to be controlled, for,

*on the Diff. for
of Expressing
of Increasing
Compassion*

*Joy, the least
to be controled.*

The feelings

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being suddenly excited, it is hardly possible to be upon our guard against their attacks. The unexpected news of some happy event, or the unlooked-for return of some long-lost friend, has been known to cause such a violent agitation of the whole frame, as to deprive the person affected, of life. Such instances are not uncommon, and cannot be provided against, as they depend wholly on the nature of the event, or the nervous system of the sufferer; yet, in regulating the more common expressions of these feelings, we ought to be guided by the dictates of reason and propriety.

*Public Joy
is ridiculous*

Public sensations of joy are often very foolishly expressed, and sometimes not less so in private. When the multitude give loose to theirs, it is generally without moderation or decency; their numbers excuse their follies, and the flame of sympathy flies from one to another, without giving them time to consider whether they are right or wrong. The foolish custom of illuminations on joyful events is beginning to be disused, and our exultation will be more rationally expressed, by making the poor rejoice with us. The connection between light and pleasure is easily formed, yet it is trifling and ridiculous, and contains only the expression of our first feelings, to which,

when those of sober reason succeed, we smile at our folly, and seek for some more laudable demonstrations of joy. These effusions are always to be dreaded in mobs that are not thoroughly civilized, but among a people who do not connect the ideas of drunkenness and riot with those of exultation and gratitude, their expressions of satisfaction are peaceable, rational, and harmonious.

Nothing can make a man more thoroughly ^{Exhausted} ridiculous, than extravagant expressions of joy, ^{Exhausted} even on great occasions, but where the event ^{is as} is not of sufficient importance to interest the feelings of those around him, he becomes ludicrous and contemptible. The different methods in which coarse and polished people express their satisfaction, make one striking difference between them; those of the former are sensual, intemperate, and violent; those of the latter are refined, rational, and elegant: theirs is the mirth that "after no repenting brings," the lively dance, the cheerful song, the harp, the viol, and the tabret. The vulgar have no method of expressing their feelings on joyful occasions, but by drunkenness ¹⁸⁴ and noise, and for hours of mirth they suffer weeks of pain and repentance. The effusions of polished minds, at their own happiness, or that of their

127/ "In wild excess the vulgar breast takes
 "Till buried in debauch, the bliss ceases
 (Goldsmith's Travels

The feelings

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friends, are shewn in benevolence to those around them and innocent expressions of festivity.

*Indignation
at Villany
more noble
than resent-
ment ag^t it.*

The feelings of indignation and resentment border nearly on each other, yet the former seem to be more personal than the latter, and are more nearly allied to virtue, for a generous indignation at the sight of meanness or villainy, is among the noblest of our feelings. To spurn at a base or contemptible action is the characteristic of a great and virtuous mind, exalted above the gross temptations of money or interest. To be indignant at the mean artifices of ambition, or the exulting confidence of successful villainy, is a feeling which does honor to our nature, and places us in the highest rank of human beings; yet to be easily excited to indignation on slight and frivolous grounds, exposes us to ridicule and contempt. The man who blusters when no one meant to offend him, and talks of resenting injuries which were never intended, may possess strong feelings of resentment and honor, but they will hardly preserve him from insult; other feelings in excess may excite our pity, but these can only raise a frown or a smile. The emotions of indignation against those by whom we have been injured, are difficult to be repressed; for self-defence

being the first impulse of our nature, we are irresistibly impelled to retaliate upon those who attack our person, our peace, or our property; yet the method in which we regulate our feelings upon such occasions, makes the great difference between men of savage and cultivated minds. With the former, the slightest injury is not only resented, but suffered to ripen into malice and revenge; their enemies are persecuted with the utmost implacable hatred, even unto death, and the injuries of the father are often handed down to the son, from generation to generation, till they become a kind of family inheritance; such direful feuds are found to exist not only in the earliest stages of the world, but even in those which are comparatively civilized. The resentments of polished and cultivated minds, even for the severest injuries, are never suffered to transgress the bounds of decorum, nor to disturb the peace of society. Good manners prevent them from noticing slight injuries or affronts; while religion, philosophy, and reason, forbid the exercise of resentment for severer ones beyond the disposition requisite to prevent future attacks, beyond a temperate appeal to law and justice. In such cases, a man of strong feelings will naturally be led to shew,

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that he is not insensible of injury, but he will repress those feelings when they are likely to become passions; he will moderate his indignation and resentment, when he perceives them ripen into revenge; he will forbear to disturb the peace of his friends or society by any violent display of those emotions, which are, and ought to be, merely personal. To endeavour to make others a party in our quarrels and disputes till we find our enemies have done so before us to the injury of our character and interest, bespeaks a selfish, mean, and irritable disposition, totally incompatible either with the meekness of christianity, or the sober dignity of philosophy; it is the strongest evidence of an uncultivated and illiberal mind; it shews a want of education, want of good manners, and a want even of common decency; for, why should our feelings be the rule and standard of other peoples? why should we expect them to take up our quarrels, in things that only interest ourselves? why should we disturb the peace of others with our grievances? Whoever, therefore, in such cases, suffers his resentment to get the better of his judgment, and makes the first appeal to the public, is answerable for all the ill consequences which must inevitably attend the excesses of indignation and irritability.

The lesser irritations of the feelings, which produce peevishness and petulance, ought equally to be guarded against; for, tho' not so extensively dangerous as those which grow up into malice and revenge, they tend to sour the comforts and disturb the harmony of society. Men of fine feelings are, in every rank of life, liable to be perpetually annoyed by indelicacy, coarseness, and violence; nay, they are even liable to be irritated by the apathy or want of similar feelings in those with whom they spend a great part of their time; they ought therefore, to be particularly careful to conceal, as far as possible, their resentment and disgust at what only concerns themselves. Things which give no pain to common men, are capable of striking to the heart of those who possess tender and refined feelings. A smile, a look, or a frown, may give a stab, on particular occasions, which hardly admits of palliation or remedy. No man can live long in the world, without meeting with ingratitude, neglect and cruelty; these misfortunes he should learn to bear with a manly spirit, and if he is conscious of not having deserved them, he should summon to his aid that self-importance which is our best support in all difficulties, and teaches us to despise our persecutors. Some men are apt to

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value the opinion of the world too highly, and others to treat it with too much contempt, the latter is the more dangerous extreme, for as the love of praise is the strongest motive of action, the man who is indifferent to it, will most likely be indifferent to censure, and therefore liable to disregard the rigid dictates of morality.

*Politeness
may be
called the
counterfeit
of feeling
as it is
an excellent
substitute.*

Politeness has been called artificial benevolence, it is, however, more properly the counterfeit of feeling. To disguise our own feelings and to respect those of other people, is the sum of good breeding, for tho' there are a thousand little attentions to the wants and pleasures of others which mere politeness can never reach, and can only proceed from genuine sensibility, yet it is an excellent restraint upon our feelings in some cases, and an excellent substitute for them in others; it softens all that little, peevish irritability, to which even the best men are sometimes liable; it makes many people pleased with themselves, who have little else to be pleased with, and contributes more than many greater qualities, to sweeten the intercourse of society. How any man can coolly do that which he knows must offend the feelings of another, merely to relieve himself from some trifling inconvenience, or to obtain a temporary satisfaction, I

am at a loss to imagine. Nothing either in our words or actions which can excite an unpleasant sensation in other people, can be well bred, however, it may be sanctioned by fashion or example.

The feelings of displeasure are nearly connected with those of resentment, and perhaps *displea* *& resentm* their difference depends more on the situation *general* of the parties, than on their disposition. Men *allied* are frequently displeased at things which they either do not choose, or have not the power, to resent. Displeasure is often more lasting, tho' not so violent, as resentment, and therefore it ought, in most cases, to be more watchfully restrained, because it frequently creates greater uneasiness to all parties.

The feelings of shame are those which, of all others, the least require restraint, for they are *advant* *of true* *shame* the strongest check upon immorality, indecency, and every species of moral deviation; yet when they are excited for light and trifling causes, or when they proceed from that false modesty which is frequently the attendant of youth and ignorance, they ought to be resisted, as being both painful to the mind of the sufferer, and injurious to his future interest. The gentle blush of innocence is its best security, and modesty gives a double attraction to female

charms. The loud, coarse laugh, the broad stare, the impudent leer, which was once the distinction of prostitutes, may have become fashionable, but it can never become amiable. The feelings of ingenuous shame which mark the modest youth at the commission of impropriety, or the suspicion of a crime, are so far from being incompatible with manly dignity, that they are the best characteristic of young minds, and the most happy presage of future virtues. The "*ingenui vultus puer ingenuique pudoris*," tho' hackneyed by frequent repetition can never lose its value with men who possess any sense of purity and honesty. Villains and profligates may laugh at innocence and integrity, but they who retain any of their early feelings at the commission of vice or crime, will smile at the reproaches of hardened offenders. 'Tis a good maxim to teach the young, to feel shame at nothing but a bad action; yet how many are there, both young and old, who experience the most uncomfortable feelings at things which are neither wicked nor improper. Young people, who have either been brought up with great restraint at home, or unused to mix in company, feel shy, reserved, and awkward, when they have occasion to go more into the world; this is justly called false shame, and

ought to be early prevented, because a degree of modest confidence is requisite for every young man who wishes to get through life with any degree of ease or comfort. By these false feelings, which are difficult to be overcome even in advanced age, many a man has been prevented from exercising his talents for conversation, and saying in company what might have repressed the insolence of talkative ignorance, and given a weight to his own character, which false modesty and reserve can never acquire. Forwardness and impudence are certainly disgusting, yet false shame is attended with much inconvenience. The progress of reason has banished much of that foolish modesty, which used to make one man ashamed to look another in the face, because he happened to be richer or nobler than himself. Such follies are now exploded; and tho' a due respect to rank is preserved (without which no state of civilized society can subsist), yet an honest man, in any rank or station, may look the proudest lord in the face, without shame or blushing; 'tis vice only that ought to be confounded.

The feelings of impatience, in irritable minds, are not easy to be restrained, for they are always in proportion to the degree of interest

*The impas
feelin
irrita
minds
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The feelings

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which we take in that which is expected; yet they expose us to much inconvenience, and frequently to serious injury; for they who cannot command themselves to wait for the tardy arrival of that which they are desirous to possess, be it of great or of little moment, will be often liable to have others take advantage of their impatience. Nothing can be well done which is done in a haste, for time is requisite to bring all things to maturity. They who rashly undertake any concern, either public or private, and expect all the advantages of it immediately, will frequently be disappointed, and sometimes cheated. Whether in trade, in love, in war, in agriculture, in marriage, in learning, in science, or in politics, success is the tardy fruit of time and experience; and he who cannot command his feelings to wait for the result of his exertions, but expects the event to succeed immediately to the conception or commencement of his design, will never achieve any thing which can produce satisfaction to himself, or advantage to the rest of society.

*aversion
& disgust
often the
feelings of
a superior
mind*

The feelings of aversion or disgust are those to which men of superior minds are most liable. The world is too full of misery, vice, and meanness, not to give continual offence to men

of refined and generous feelings; but notwithstanding there may be great excuse for being frequently disgusted with vice and folly, yet we ought to be careful not to permit these feelings to degenerate into sullen misanthropy; with this caution it may be fully allowable to express our aversion and contempt for every species of levity, iniquity, and treachery.

Sympathy is the foundation of love, friendship, patriotism, and all the noblest energies *Sympa* and passions of the human mind; for, without *the form* partaking and entering very strongly into the *of love & all* feelings of others, we never could experience *noblest* those sensations which enable us to feel as they *= give* feel, "to rejoice with them that do rejoice," or to mourn with those that are afflicted. The feelings of sympathy may, however, be carried to excess; they may dispose us to weep over those who deserve no pity, and to succor that distress which is the merited effect of imprudence. By the feelings it is chiefly that men have any hold upon each other, in those things where force cannot, or ought not, to be applied.

Under the general name of feelings, are comprised those strong susceptibilities of pleasure and pain which are peculiar to tender and sensitive minds, and which form the most amia-

The feelings

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able part of the human character. Men of this description feel acutely both for themselves and others; while the generality of the world are easily roused to indignation, resentment, contempt, displeasure, and impatience; but they have not pity, tenderness, nor sympathy; they feel acutely for themselves, but the sufferings of others they regard.

*The importance
of a
susceptibility
of pleasure*

A strong susceptibility of pleasure is one of the most enviable privileges of our nature; without this, we are in a manner lost to all that is great and good, to moral and to natural beauty, to virtue and to taste; the charms of nature and of art are hid from our sight; the sun shines, the flowers bloom, and the birds sing to us in vain, if we are not sensible of their delights. The lively imitations of nature which art has learned to produce, are nothing to him who has no relish for their beauties; and the charms of refined society are mere nonsense to the wretch who possesses neither delicacy of feeling, nor elevation of sentiment; he lives a blank in the creation, consuming the fruits of the earth; he performs the dull drudgery of existence, blindfold and mechanically. To the feeling heart, there are a thousand sources of delight, a thousand pleasures and a thousand pains, for the one cannot be had

without the other. The same sensitive organization which renders us susceptible of the most refined extasies of pleasure, leaves us also exposed to the rude touch of misfortune, of offence, and injury; yet since our frame is inevitably exposed to sensations of pain, and the constitution of our nature cannot be altered, we should ever be upon our guard against sudden attacks, and blunt the edge of calamity or offence by the firmness of reason and prudence. Men of too great sensibility are apt to be fastidious and disgusted with things around them; such a disposition, when carried to excess, is troublesome both to ourselves and others, but I despise a man who is pleased with every thing, for such a man must either have very little judgment, or very little feeling.

How many sources of amusement are there for those who are capable of receiving pleasure from refined enjoyments, compared with those who have no gratifications but such as are sordid and sensual! The man who possesses a feeling and cultivated mind, receives delight from the varied pleasures of poetry, music, painting, and all the imitative arts; from rural scenery, and from the happiness of others in all ranks and stations. A man of true sensibility feels his heart expand when he partakes, or

*The source
of amuse-
ment which
is apt to*

even [reads, of the felicity which others enjoy. Such a man is a blessing to his species, he extends his beneficent influence to all around him, he attaches himself to every human being who deserves his regard, and flies from none but those who are selfish, cold, and hard-hearted; from such he turns with aversion and disdain, to seek for solace and enjoyment with minds congenial to his own, who are disposed to confer happiness, and rejoice to have the means and opportunities of doing so. Sensibility attaches itself even to inanimate objects, for the house, the village, or the tree, to which we have been long accustomed, are considered with a degree of affectionate regard, and if they are connected with ideas of happiness in our youth, they hold a place in our esteem which borders upon friendship.—Hence also the affection which we show to the country that contains the place of our birth, when endeared to us by the remembrance of past delights. ^{105. 286} _{p 3 21} These are the feelings which do honor to our nature, and which it is easier to experience than to describe; they cannot, indeed, be adequately described by any power of language, but their beneficent effects may be felt by all who come within the sphere of their influence, and those who possess them can never

fail to be a blessing to their friends and to society.

Who that has a spark of sensibility, does not turn with the mingled feelings of pity and disgust from the sight of the wretched prostitute, whether shivering in rags, or flaunting in the gaudy trappings of slavery? yet even these feelings are sometimes overcome by the strength of irresistible passion, but they can never be wholly destroyed in a tender and sensitive heart. The excess of sensibility, whether excited by pleasure or pain, not only tends to make us ridiculous, but in some cases, if carried to a great length, would put a stop to the common operations of the world; for some men have extended their feelings so far, as to be shocked at the idea of putting to death those animals which are requisite for our food and sustenance, and without which the world would, in time, be overstocked.

Poets are men of lively imagination, which, in general, produces tender feelings, they are therefore, more liable to eccentricities than other men, and may therefore more easily be pardoned; yet they sometimes cannot avoid being ridiculous to those whose feelings are either less acute, or better restrained. Many a tender elegy has been written on the death of

Sensibility tho' often weakened is never entirely destroyed

Poets, from possessing lively feelings are subject to greater eccentricities than other men

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no ought
d. to
indulge
in such
feelings

a titmouse, and some have even lamented the fate of a fly. Thomson whines for a whole page, over the plunder of a bee-hive, which is very pretty in poetry, but ridiculous in real life, for most animals when they have answered the end of their creation, must be destroyed in some way or other; yet if this foolish feeling were indulged to a greater extent, we might neither eat nor drink, for even water contains a thousand insects, which, when we swallow, suffer a death not less painful, than bees or fishes when they are killed.

unwise feeling
in improperly
dictated by
selfish men

The feelings of individuals for the public, or of the public for individuals, are treated by men of cold and selfish hearts as chimerical and ridiculous; some men deny their existence, and others smile at them as romantic and childish, yet history and experience will testify that they have existed, and reason does not disdain to acknowledge their utility. Who that does not regard his species with indifference, or concentrate all his affections within the narrow limits of his friends, can forbear to feel for the miseries of those, who, tho' personally unknown to him, have that strong claim to compassion which is founded in the similarity of our nature. A heathen poet could exclaim, "*Homo sum, nil humanum a me alienum puto*;" and christians

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note

have a nearer connection with each other.— Who can hear that thousands have perished by war, by disease, or famine, without feeling for their miserable fate, or for the still severer sufferings of those whom they have left behind? Who can see, unmoved, the distress or calamity of a great nation sinking under accumulated burthens, which must press to ruin innumerable helpless and innocent sufferers? The man who partakes not in these feelings, I should be sorry to own as my friend, for, tho' he might say, that his mind was wholly engrossed by a regard for his own connections, I should be tempted to suspect his sincerity. Benevolence is sometimes mistaken for feeling, but they are totally distinct; the one is a principle formed by reason and reflection, the other is an impulse arising from quick perceptions, or a delicacy of nerves. Great men¹⁹⁹ have in all ages called forth the sympathy of the public in their triumphs, their defeats, their miseries, their adversity, and prosperity. *not*

to note
to p 386. The sensibility of infants, tho' it depends ^{*on the*} greatly on their bodily constitution, may be ^{*of the*} heightened or lessened by the treatment they ^{*the*} receive, and the ideas with which they are early ^{*of the*} impressed. Too great indulgence, it has already been remarked, destroys sensibility, but

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too great severity will have the same effect.—
The child who has been constantly beaten and frowned upon, will grow up coarse, savage, and cruel; but if the rebukes of a father are softened by the tenderness and caresses of a mother, or any other person, the child so treated will probably possess more sensibility than any other. It is wise to teach children as early as possible to have a regard for the feelings of others, by telling them, that their misbehaviour gives uneasiness to their friends.

*we should
seize every
opportunity
to exercise
our feelings*

The occasions which excite our feelings depend not always on ourselves, but on external circumstances; yet, lest they become dull and torpid, we should avoid no opportunity by which they may be exercised for any good purpose; and, numerous events will arise in the life and concerns of every man connected with society, to call forth his sensibilities in the service of others. The pains or pleasures of our children, friends, and relatives; the concerns even of our acquaintance, and the attachment which we owe to our country, will give us frequent occasions to grieve and to rejoice, if we take an interest in the happiness of others.— Sensibility in those who are blessed with feeling minds, is easily excited, and sometimes with difficulty repressed; yet even in those who

have possessed it most strongly in their early youth, it may be destroyed by a thousand causes; by poverty, by riches, by avarice, by dissipation, by gaming, by ambition, by power, by religion, by custom, by prejudice, and by sufferings.

The excess either of riches or poverty is *The excess of Rich or Poverty* equally destructive of that tender sensibility to pleasure and pain, which may sometimes render us miserable, tho' always amiable. *= fructus Sensib.* The poor have no leisure to think of any thing but their mere physical wants, and the labor by which these are supplied, and, therefore, tho' in infancy they may have possessed the tenderest feelings, yet these feelings are generally blunted as they grow older, and are compelled to struggle for a living. Sometimes, however, we meet in lower life with those who have not been deprived of this best part of their nature, who are affectionate, gentle, and tender; who still possess those quick sensibilities, which make them feel the coarseness and cruelty of their superiors, and lament their miserable dependence.

Riches have, indeed, a worse effect than even *Riches a worse than po* poverty, on the tender feelings of the heart, for they who are poor may sometimes sympathize with those who suffer under the same lot as

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themselves, but the rich are too far removed from the evils of life, to feel much compassion for those who are struggling with adversity. They have less chance, also, of retaining those feelings of affection and tenderness, which are seldom to be found but in those who are educated with sentiments of mutual dependence, which make one man enter into the feelings of another, by considering himself as subject to like misery. The great are educated as a distinct class in society, and seldom require each others assistance; they can always be amused, they can always be in company, and they feel less need than other people, of those tender sympathies which endear men to each other. Riches are also unfavorable to that nice discrimination of character which makes us prefer one man to another on account of his virtues or his talents, because, in a certain rank of life, men are not regarded for these qualities, but for the company they keep, or the money they spend. No wonder that those who make no proper selection of their company, should be insensible to those things which alone ought to attach men to each other. The rich, in general, view with little interest the joys and sorrows of those beneath them, and consider the poor as a race of beings born only for their plea-

sure and convenience; they can have little regard, therefore, for their feelings, and they relieve their natural wants, merely from the selfish idea that it is for their own interest.

The same want of feeling for the indigent, *The accumulation of wealth every day renders feelings* extends itself through every rank of those who possess property; but if these two extremes are destructive of tenderness and sensibility, they are not more so than the determination to rise from poverty to riches, and that avarice which is the constant attendant of increasing wealth. The man who begins to taste the sweets of making a fortune, generally suffers himself to be engrossed by that single idea; he has no other pleasure, no other pursuit; he smiles at the folly of those who do not follow his example, and has no pity for distress, whether voluntary or inevitable. Every other consideration is sacrificed to the desire of becoming rich, and his heart is completely hardened against the claims of humanity.

The constant pursuit of trifling and vicious pleasure, *The constant pursuit of trifling and vicious pleasure destroys the powers* has the most unhappy effect on the sensitive faculties. The man who suffers himself to be wholly engrossed by the thoughts of amusement, can have little relish for the pleasures of sensibility, and generally very little regard for those who are most nearly connected

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with him. The thoughts of public or private misery, the loss of parents, children, or friends, are soon forgotten at a rout or a dinner party, and he who can always fly from himself, can have little feeling for others. To be alone, is the greatest punishment to him who has never been accustomed to think, but on the objects immediately before him; and the man who has never used himself to reflection, must soon wish for the sight of those things which occupy his attention without exertion or trouble, and pass before his eyes, like the objects of a magic lantern, without leaving any durable impression. The natural tendency of constant amusement, is to make men selfish and indifferent to the concerns of others, and nothing is more destructive of sensibility, than selfishness. The tender feelings, like all our other faculties, require frequent exercise to keep them alive, and can this be expected in those who are in a constant bustle of diversions, who fly from one public place to another, from plays to routs, and from routs to balls; who turn day into night, and spend the greatest part of their time in other people's houses, who are strangers to the comforts of home, and whose life is one unvaried scene of dissipation, without a moment for thought or reflection?

It is in the sober medium of moderate enjoyments that we are to look for sensibility or virtue; in a life neither engrossed by the pursuits of pleasure, ambition, nor wealth, but equally divided between duty and amusement. It is in such a life only we are to look for sensibility and attention to the feelings of others; for delicacy of sentiment, purity of morals, and tenderness of heart.

*Virt
most
to be
among
moder*

The passion for gaming tends more than any other to harden the heart, for the man who can bring himself to risque the comfort and happiness of his family on the throw of a die, must be lost to every tender feeling, and capable of being gratified only by the most violent agitations. The love of gaming can originate only in the hatred of repose, and the necessity which the mind naturally feels of being employed; hence it is found to be strong in those only who have no other means of employment. It is the opposite of every thing tender, because it continually excites the most boisterous of the passions; it engrosses the whole man, and he who is thoroughly devoted to it, can hardly find pleasure in any other pursuit. A gamester can have no love for his friends or family, because he constantly puts their happiness at stake; he can have no taste or feeling for the

*Gam
high
= pride
the h*

The feelings

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elegant arts, because his mind is for ever agitated by those violent passions, which are the opposite of all that is tender and refined; he can have no regard for his country, because it is impossible he can be disinterested. The continual practice of playing for immense sums, must have turned his whole thoughts to his own immediate interest, and a successful gamester generally becomes a miser, a man lost to every other idea but that of money, and solely intent on accumulation or plunder.

*a. abstraction
favorable
sensibility*

A life of continual meditation on speculative subjects, leaves little time for the cultivation of the heart, for such is the term often given to the feelings, and few men whose studies have been remote from common life have been found to possess either refined taste or sensibility.

*ambition &
other
passions
destructive
pity*

The pursuits of ambition are not more favorable to the cultivation and exercise of feeling, than those of any other violent passion, for they equally tend to engross the whole man, and divert his mind from all other ideas.—The enjoyment of power operates in a different manner on the feelings, not by its own immediate agency, but by the passions which it creates; by the pride and self-importance which are the constant attendants of high stations;

by the hatred, jealousy, and malice, which men in the possession of great power shew towards all those who dispute or oppose their authority.

Religion is said to take stronger possession of the mind than any other principle, and no wonder, when, in some men, the hopes which it gives of another world can make them forget the present; yet it is not true but false religion, when it takes a wrong hold of the mind, for they who can torment the body for the good of the soul, must have formed very strange notions of a Deity. The cruelties which have been committed in the name of religion, are a strong proof how much it tends to destroy the feelings of compassion; such ideas of religion are now happily banished, and a sanguinary bigot is a monster as rarely seen as an ouran-outang. Instances however, are to be found of those, in whom religion has blunted the sensibility of the mind to all pains or pleasures, either for themselves or others, except such as are derived from the contemplation of futurity. They view the calamities of life as salutary preparations for heaven, and consider the evils of the world as judgments of the Almighty, at which it is impious to murmur or repine.—Such men can have no pity for the unfortunate,

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The Feelings

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whom they consider the favorites of the Deity; nor can they lament the death of children, parents, or friends, whom they believe to be translated to a place of eternal felicity. In most of such men it is only a natural want of feeling covered by the cloke of religion.

*The effects
of Custom
& Exercise
on the
Sensient
Feelings*

The effects of continual exercise on the tender feelings, are little attended to by those who look superficially on the affairs of the world, and never enquire into causes. Custom, which some men call a second nature, is in truth, our first, and one habit can destroy another; for the most feeling hearts may in time become steeled, by a perpetual repetition of the same objects. The soldier, who shudders in his first engagement at the sight of misery and death, becomes in time familiarized to such spectacles, and views them with indifference. The butcher, who at first lifted the knife with reluctance to shed the blood of the tender lamb, soon forgets these emotions, and goes to his murderous trade with thoughtless apathy.— And the nurse, who has long been accustomed to the groans of sickness, hears them at last without any painful or distressing emotions. It is the same with the talents, for there are few men who shew the same ability and good sense upon all subjects. Let it be remarked,

however, that custom does not extend itself beyond those things to which it has been particularly applied, and ^{///}that men who are callous to one description of sufferings, are not so to every other.—Disappointment, contradiction, and constant communication with people of coarse feelings and sentiments, will blunt, and in time destroy, even the finest sensibility.—When the temper is perpetually irritated, the feelings will gradually be worn out, and they who are frequently witnesses to feigned or even real distress, will in time become callous to the one as well as the other.

*or
note*

The delicacy of mind which makes us alive to all the milder affections, tho' frequently the cause of pain, is nevertheless, the purest source of pleasure, for the man who possesses these affections, feels a satisfaction in the society of his friends, to which men of ruder minds are total strangers. It is not merely company that gives him pleasure, but the company of those he admires; he sees with ten-fold delight his children, his friends, and relatives, if they are dear to him, and takes an interest in every thing that concerns them with ten times more zeal, than those who barely consider it their duty to be kind to their nearest connections, and regard them rather with a kin-

*Delica
mind
of the
source
plea*

The Feelings

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of mechanical affection, than with the ardor of an irresistible propensity. It will sometimes happen that too great a delicacy of feeling, either in morals or taste, may make a man uncomfortable, and his friends the same. A strong sense of rectitude in all things, may be carried to such an extreme as to become even itself an obliquity, but it is an amiable obliquity, if I may be allowed the expression.

*pleasure
pleasing*

A man who feels no pleasure in giving pleasure to others, tho' he may be a clever man, an agreeable man, or a learned man, is no more than an animated statue.—He has no feelings, sympathies, or affections in common with the rest of his species. He stands insulated from the rest of the world; all his thoughts center in himself, if not a monster of vice, he is without a single virtue—he can neither love nor be loved by any one.

*advantages
sensibility*

The beauties of feeling and sentiment can only be understood by those who are themselves possessed of sensibility, and to such people nothing coarse or selfish can give pleasure; they feel pain at the idea of giving pain to others, and when such a disposition is adorned by elegance of manners and elevation of sentiment, it forms the highest excellence of our nature, it banishes all coarse and cruel

amusements, it puts an end to all sordid pursuits, and discountenances that unjust spirit of censoriousness and satire, which indulges itself at the expence of other men's characters and comfort. Strength and delicacy of mind, like the same qualities in the Corinthian pillar, are thoroughly compatible with each other.

Grandeur and dignity of soul are not the lot of every man, nor are they requisite in every station; but a man without feeling, in whatever station he is placed, is the disgrace of his species. A moralist,¹¹² whether he writes grave disquisitions, or makes imagination the vehicle of instruction, if he possesses no delicacy of feeling, can never interest his readers. A poet without sensibility¹¹³ may amuse the fancy, but can never improve the heart, and a player,¹¹⁴ who undertakes to represent the tender parts, either of tragedy or comedy, without great natural feelings, is more likely to be laughed at than applauded. From tenderness and sensibility proceed all that is beautiful and pathetic in poetry, in prose, and in eloquence; sublimity may elevate, and argument may convince, but pathos alone can melt the soul to its purpose.

The sensibility of women is almost proverbial,¹¹⁵ and nothing, surely, is given to man, ^{on 1.} ^{Sens.} ^{7. 4.}

D D
14/ Diderot wrote a treatise to prove that man who has feeling, can never a good performer! -

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esse
Every
7. 8.

The Feelings

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*e evils
Cruelty
-apathy.*

which so sweetens the cup of existence.—The miseries produced by cruelty and apathy, are to be seen, felt, and heard, in every quarter of the globe. The animal creation is not exempt from the cruelty of man, and men are above measure cruel to each other; yet active cruelty is not the whole of our guilt; indifference to the sufferings of others goes to make up the sum of human misery, and every man who fails to exert his powers in the relief of distress, whenever it comes within his knowledge, contributes to the continuance of those evils which the Persians attribute to an evil principle, but which the better faith of christians imputes to the wise dispensation of providence. On the whole, tho' sensibility may be affected by external circumstances, it depends chiefly on our bodily temperament.

EDUCATION.

Rectique cultus pectora roborant. HOR.

(vide note 117 - p 39)

MY remarks on education, tho' they are not so numerous, nor so diffuse, as those of many modern writers, will not, I trust, be the less useful: they are intended solely for practice, and are derived from experience; for in this I have one advantage over my predecessors; I have children of my own, which cannot be said by many authors on education, ancient or modern. I do not pretend to invent plausible theories, I give plain rules, whose merits may be easily tried. I am no lover of system, tho' I admire the custom of generalizing ideas into principles; but experience is, in my opinion, the only test of excellence. To form theoretical opinions is one thing, to give practical rules is another; the one is intended for those who reason more than they act, the other for those who act without reasoning; the one is intended for philosophers, the other for those

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who are no philosophers at all ; the one is for the learned, the other for the world. To such I write, to the ignorant and uninformed.

*The objects
stated*

EDUCATION is the best gift of parents to their children, and without it, all the advantages of fortune are only evils in disguise. Its great objects are to inspire young people with noble, elevated, and generous sentiments ; to teach them to despise every thing mean and dishonest ; to understand their true interest, to regulate their passions, and to cultivate the affections of the heart. Whenever we see a man misconduct himself in life, let us ask how he was brought up, what care was taken to form his mind ? and nine times in ten, it will be found that his errors arise from a bad education. Learning is only a means of education, tho' it is frequently mistaken for the end, and without the dispositions above mentioned, it is a useless ornament. Every thing valuable in society depends on education, or the early formation of the mind and habits.

*difficulty
laying down
moral
recepts.*

The great difficulty in writing upon this subject, is, to lay down precepts suited to all ranks ; indeed, it is almost impossible, for there are so few things which can be common to all, that more cannot be expected, than to make the rules for forming the mind as general

as possible, and leave them to be applied by the discretion of parents in all ranks. The studies which are suited to a man of fortune, cannot be proper for a peasant, nor are the same virtues required of the two ; yet sobriety, temperance, moderation, honesty, and oeconomy, are equally suited to all ranks and characters. These are not relative, but positive virtues ; they are equally the interest, and tend to promote the happiness of the rich and poor ; they are adapted to all times and seasons, and can never be out of place. The cultivation of the mind by those virtues which are common to all ranks, and by the pursuits which are adapted to different stations, is the great art of education, and without this is duly attended to, every thing else is either culpable or ridiculous.

There is one profession, viz. that of a soldier, whose institution and whole employment are so totally opposite to every thing here intended, that I feel an ardent wish that it could be wholly banished from the world, yet, considering the nature of man, and his tendency to propagate beyond the power of the earth to afford him subsistence, it seems hardly probable that he will ever bring himself to prevent, rather than cut off a redundant population ;

*War, a
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Education

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war, therefore, with most of its horrors, will still continue, and man will never be completely civilized.

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an
ly period The commencement of education ought to be much earlier than many parents imagine, for tho' the dispositions of the mind depend in some measure on the temperament of the body, yet they are much more affected by external objects than is generally supposed. To those who maintain the existence of innate ideas, and the irresistible power of natural disposition, I must here endeavour to reply, because their error is of considerable importance, so far as it relates to the task of forming the rising generation.—A child of five minutes old cannot be supposed to have many ideas, or if it has, they must lie dormant, and wait to be called forth by time, like the words in Munchausen's speaking trumpet, congealed by the frost. On this supposition the mind must be considered as a sort of separate essence imprisoned in the body, on whose growth or decay, its exertion depends during the time they are connected together; but if the mind is nothing more than a series of impressions received by the senses, and formed into ideas, then these ideas can have no existence before the child's birth. The capacity for receiving

ideas is, no doubt, born with the child, and in different children has different degrees of quickness and strength, according to their different bodily organization, tho' subject to the control of external circumstances. Two children of similar capacities may be placed in very different circumstances, and two of different capacities in similar circumstances, which will have a material effect on their talents and temper, tho' not easily perceived by superficial thinkers. By the combined influence of these two causes the minds of men are formed, and it is for want of taking them both into consideration that so many obstinate errors continue to exist on the subject of education.

The framers and followers of systems are seldom wholly in the right. Helvetius maintained, that the improvement of the mind was independent of the body, and rested solely on the power of external circumstances; others, both before and after him, have asserted the contrary, and both are probably in the wrong, for the truth, as in most cases, lies between the two extremes. Bodily organization must have a considerable effect, both on the temper and talents, yet not so great as to be incapable of being modified, and in some degree counter-

*Two Systems
perfect,
from our
ignorance
of the abstract
qualities
of the mind.*

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acted, by education. The defenders of materialism cannot surely deny, that the temperament of the body has great influence on the mind; for if there be no such thing as spirit, independent of matter, then that matter, more finely organized, which composes the sentient faculty, and is called mind, must depend greatly on the organization of the body. We see it in horses, and in many other animals, and why should it not be the same in men, who, tho' they differ from them in the nature of their faculties, resemble them as to the method by which these faculties are formed. It may therefore be safely affirmed, that the mental faculties are liable to the control of external circumstances, tho' circumstances cannot always overcome the effects of the bodily organization. Some are by nature and constitution dull, obstinate, and unfeeling; while others are lively, ardent, and gentle. The sensitive faculties are formed by nature, in the formation of the body, but chance or instruction directs their particular destination. Whoever commences and continues the great work of education, with a due regard to these different operations, will be more likely to succeed in his attempts, than he who leans entirely, either to the one or the other.

It is of consequence that we provide, in the first instance, for the health of our children by the sound constitution of our own bodies, for their temper is oftener affected by illness than we are apt to believe. If a young child cries much, it must be ill, or in want of something, for it is not capable of being effected by any ideas but those of bodily pain or pleasure. A child newly born should be washed in tepid water, which may be gradually cooled till it is six months old, and for the first two months at least I recommend that it should sleep with a grown person, for it is well known that children of all other creatures have the least power of generating heat from their own bodies. It is very often a very dangerous experiment to attempt to make young children hardy; all constitutions will not bear it, and no rules positively general can be given either for forming the bodies or the minds of children. Temperance, exercise, and flannel, are the best preservatives of health at all ages, and in childhood particularly. The frequency of consumptions in this country, is attributed principally to the want of warm clothing, and the sudden changes from hot to cold, to which, from our climate, we are so much exposed. Tho' I recommend warmth,

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I by no means wish children to be kept much in the house; when they are well defended, they may brave all weathers; even the youngest should be out once a day, and the elder ones should never come near a fire, tho' one in the room may be permitted.--Cleanliness is the next thing essentially conducive to the health of children; they ought to be washed twice a day at least, but they should not remain too long exposed to the cold. ¹²⁰ The dress of young children was formerly attended with much pain and trouble, and ultimately, from its tightness and improper pressure, occasioned many diseases; it is now more loose and wholesome, but perhaps yet encumbered with too much variety, so that putting it off and on are painful operations. I certainly do not wish to make every thing easy to children, because they must encounter many difficulties in the world, and the earlier they are accustomed to bear them, it will be better for themselves; yet it is both foolish and wicked to give them needless vexation and trouble.

hda
p 392

improper
treatment
by nurses

Tho' I have no wish to interfere with the province of nurses, yet as these people are in general obstinate and ignorant, and seldom take the trouble to think, but act entirely from custom, it is requisite that those who do

think, and are anxious for the health of their children, should shew them, both by reason and experience, wherein they are mistaken. They more generally err, from feeding children too much, than too little, and as to their dress, they had rather make them cry for hours, than put one pin less in their clothes than they have been used to; some of them are for ever plying the poor infants with medicine, and others, when they do not sleep, have been known to give them gin and other strong liquors. This may answer their immediate purpose, but what is the consequence? the children either die in convulsions, or live miserable, rickety, and unhealthy; they are pined in their growth, and are for ever troubled with weak stomachs, and pains in their limbs and bowels. The best nurses require therefore to be overlooked by the watchful eye of a parent.

note
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The food of children seems to be so obviously pointed out by nature, that it is wonderful how it could ever be mistaken; the breast of the mother, or the healthiest nurse that can be got, is so obviously adapted to the tender stomachs of infants, that nothing can be substituted equally nutritious and wholesome. Tho' much has been written on the duty and necessity of mothers nursing their own

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Education

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children, yet I will readily allow that it is not practicable in all cases, because much more is required to make a good nurse than many people imagine. An even temper, regular diet, moderate spirits, gentle exercise, and a sufficiency of support for the infant, are all requisite for the undertaking, and are seldom found together; but the excuses of vanity are not to be listened to for a moment. Did we live in a state of nature, or did we approach nearer to that state, every mother might be qualified to be the nurse of her own child; the obstructions to that duty are amongst the evils attending the present state of things. Those men who adopt a certain set of rules, which they apply to all cases, right or wrong, are in danger of doing more harm than good. Theoretically speaking, it is desirable that every mother should nurse her own child, but this cannot always be accomplished with safety, and I have no doubt that many a child's life has been lost by this rigid adherence to system. To distinguish one case from another is a proof of superior judgment; to apply the same rule to all is either weakness or obstinacy in the extreme. After they begin to get teeth, nature seems to require a

stronger diet, and a little meat, now and then is requisite; for, notwithstanding all that fanciful theorists may say, the flesh of animals is formed to be the food of man, particularly in cold climates, and without it, the lower ranks of people become puny and consumptive; but with the rich it is used too frequently; to children, however, it ought to be given seldom, for to them, too poor and too gross living are equally hurtful; the one causes consumptions, the other diseases of the blood.

top 394 A child that is fed on soups¹²¹ and sauces¹²², will soon shew it in boils and blotches. A quantity of sweet things is equally pernicious¹²³, for, tho' sugar is wholesome when taken moderately, yet, when used to excess, it creates bile and indigestion. Pastry is another thing equally injurious to tender stomachs, like those of infants, for the digestion of many persons has been ruined when young, by immoderate indulgence in such trash. The best drink for children is water, and as to eating, never let them mind what they eat, if it be but good of its kind, and wholesome, for few things are more disgusting, contemptible, and troublesome, than excessive delicacy and gross indulgence in eating. To have a good appetite, and to be indifferent about what we eat, are

125 *ambitiosam mensam fortuna parca virtus apponit"*
(Democritus)

cura cibi magna, incuria virtutis"
(Cato Cens.)

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strong marks of good health, and a well disciplined mind, for by a determination to do so, any man may derive as much gratification from the most simple food, as from the most costly delicacies or high seasoned dishes; and no indulgence seems more unworthy a man of sense and reflection than that of the palate. I have seen many little epicures of six or seven years old, more nice and fastidious at table than a pampered voluptuary of fifty. To eat to excess at night, is laying a load upon nature when she is least able to bear it, and preparing for a disturbed and unquiet sleep—a sleep which affords no refreshment either to the mind or body, and is the surest means of destroying health. Tea is another thing which children should never taste; its pernicious effects are now so fully proved, as to leave it no advocates but custom and prejudice; the use of this deleterious herb, is the cause of many more diseases than we apprehend, but the custom is too deeply rooted among all ranks, to be easily destroyed. It is one great bond of union among the better sort of people, who, having no rational motive for meeting together, invite each other to *drink tea*¹²⁴; but, tho' tea is the pretence, the object is to kill time by the help of cards and scandal; for the insipid prat-

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tle of a tea party can only be enlivened by tossing about pieces of painted paper, and retailing the ill-natured anecdotes which the morning's employment has collected or invented. To deprive the ladies of this comfort would be cruel in the extreme; yet, if they could bring themselves to substitute any thing more innocent in its place, and call it tea, the purposes of a party would be equally answered, and the nerves of the delicate fair ones be effectually preserved. To the poor, (whose comforts are few and hardly earned) tea is a constant solace; when drank hot, it refreshes after labor, tho' it weakens in the end; and if labor and frequent exposure to the air did not repair the ravages it occasions, the consequences would be more dreadful. It is, however, a wretched substitute for solid food, for it is agreed that it contains no nourishment whatever, and were it not for the mixture of cream and sugar, would be ten times more ruinous to the health. These, and many such things as these, seem so obvious, as hardly to require notice, did we not see them daily overlooked, for men seldom use their judgment when their pleasure is concerned, or choose to think those things hurtful which they find pleasant; yet as nature has set before us things wholesome and destructive,

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if we do not use either our own wisdom, or the experience of others, in choosing the one and avoiding the other, we must suffer for our thoughtless temerity.

*Early exercise
strongly
recommended*

Children should be early accustomed to use their limbs, after they have acquired a proper degree of strength, for by want of use the limbs become stiff, and the children unhealthy, for want of exercise. At six months old, if not earlier, a healthy child should begin to use its feet, and, after that, it should be left to itself, as much as is consistent with safety; if it falls, let it get up again with the least help possible, and in a little time it will get up alone; if it cries, which it will often do, without being much hurt, never mind that, but try to amuse it, and the crying will soon be over; never pity it, for then it will cry the longer.

*note
p 39*

*Children of
the poor
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the most
healthy.*

Tho' the children of the poor have little attendance, they are in general, more healthy and active than those of their richer superiors, and the reason of this is, that they begin earlier to exert their own strength. After a child is able to walk, let all its playthings be such as promote exercise, and are above its powers; time and use will make them easy, for if they have only such things as they can manage with ease, they neither acquire strength nor

dexterity; when these get wrong, or out of order, or seemingly out of their reach, let them try to put them right again, for, by this means they will acquire patience, quickness, and perseverance. These things seem trifling, but they are not trifling in their effects, for it is by a continued series of impressions, and by the repetition of similar impressions, that the minds of children are formed; they bring no ideas with them into the world, and therefore much depends on what they are taught. Without this is acknowledged and understood, there can be no such thing as education; our infants may, like savages, be the mere creatures of imitation, and go right or wrong as chance directs, but without early and constant attention to the impressions they receive, they never can arrive at that degree of excellence of which their nature is capable. Tho' the general temperament of children is derived from their bodily constitution, and is, therefore, called natural; yet their particular dispositions and propensities, arise from the impressions they receive in their earliest youth.

While I am desirous to control the early propensities of children, it is by no means my wish to do it with harshness or severity; but the ear-

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lier they are controlled, the less pain they will feel from it, and for this purpose some degree of firmness is requisite. The advocates for nature, as they call themselves, are in the end much more cruel than those who follow the contrary system, for a child who has been left to himself for the first eight years of his life, will have formed ideas and inclinations so different from what he must meet with in the world, that he will ever be subject to pain and disappointment; it is, therefore, the utmost kindness, to teach him to bear contradiction, opposition, and restraint. It must not, however, be supposed that I mean to impress the minds of children with prejudices, to make them the mere creatures of art and authority, to teach them to repeat words by rote, to restrain the innocent effusions of nature, or to learn what they cannot understand, for nothing can be more dangerous or disgusting; all I mean is, to implant in them early what they can never otherwise acquire, without infinite pains and difficulty; for this purpose it is requisite to accustom them to such impressions as may form them to prudence, moderation, and self-command; may teach them to regulate their evil desires, and to be firm and steady in resisting temptations.—The

good effect of watching the early impressions of children, is not merely felt in those ideas which are the immediate result of such impressions, but in the correspondent ideas which naturally accompany them, and give the turn to their notions and propensities. Were it certain that nature had as much to do with the formation of the mind and temper as some people imagine, it would be ridiculous to wish or attempt to control her; but since it cannot be doubted that men are almost wholly the creatures of circumstances and instruction, it is greatly culpable to leave that to chance which may be acquired by vigilance, tho' not without some degree of difficulty. The two great springs of action are the appetites and the passions, which it is the business of reason to regulate and control, we cannot therefore too early teach our children to set bounds to their desires, and learn to bear disappointment. The artificial wants of life are so numerous, that we hardly have any idea how few and simple are the things requisite for health and comfort.

Education generally begins at the wrong end, that is, we often teach children to read and write, and do other things by rote, before we teach them to think. I am convinced from experience, that in order to form the

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Education

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minds of children, we should reason with them, and talk to them of things above their age, and if they are endowed by nature with even a tolerable common capacity, their reasoning powers will be much more benefited by this sort of instruction, than if deferred till a later period; they may then be taught to read, write, and count; which they will learn much quicker and easier after their faculties have acquired some strength, than in their early infancy.

erroneous
 principles;
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 it less
 it, than
 improper
 indulgence
 - correction

A parent who acts upon fixed and regular principles, even should some of those principles be erroneous, is less likely to do harm to his children, than he who corrects or indulges them from mere caprice and passion. The former will only be rigid in things of consequence; in trifles, and things unimportant, he will make allowance for infantine simplicity, and rather give them now and then what is not quite right, than sour their tempers by frequent denial, or compel them to have recourse to stratagem and fraud; he will proportion his correction to the age and reason of his child, and never expect of it that which it cannot perform. Children in full health and spirits are naturally eager and impatient, and if their desires are constantly complied with, they will, in time, never bear to be

refused ; it is requisite, therefore, to be steady in denying them whatever is improper for them to have, but to indulge them in all things that are innocent, and in time they will learn to distinguish. This method, when begun early, will prevent the necessity of beating, which, if it is possible to avoid, should never be resorted to ; but it requires great judgment to know when to refuse and when to comply. Tho' I by no means deny that whipping may now and then be of use, before a child can be talked to, yet parents ought to be very sparing of such correction, and never to use any other mode of beating. Some people indulge themselves in a cruel and dangerous custom of giving blows over different parts of the body ; and a very common mode of correction is, boxing the ears, which is, of all others, the most unjustifiable.—Children corrected with cruelty often become cruel themselves, and nothing can shew so little command of temper, or so much low breeding, as to strike a child hastily and severely.

There are some people whose whole system of education consists in whipping, it is the common corrective for all faults, and for all offences. The best substitute for this severe discipline, is a constant firmness in denying

Firmness

Education

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what is improper, and this will accustom children early, to set bounds to their desires, and submit themselves to the necessity of things; for the longer they live in the world, the more they will meet with disappointment.

*Extreme
severity
unnecessary,
injurious.*

To be severe with children for trifles, and constantly finding fault, is a sure method to spoil their tempers, and make them dislike their parents; to those under two years of age, it is impossible to talk to any purpose, and therefore we have little power over the impressions they receive; but, after that period, most children begin to compound, compare, and connect their ideas. Hastiness and impatience of temper may be corrected, by refusing to give them what they ask for, or shew signs of wanting, if it is improper; by turning their attention to something else, they soon forget the pain of being refused, and cease crying. Few children grow up to be passionate and impetuous, if they are not constantly indulged; on the other hand, obstinacy often is occasioned by needless severity. Temperament is the foundation of temper, but it may be controlled and regulated.

Children are naturally dirty, ¹²⁹(and if they are healthy, they cannot always be kept clean) yet they may be taught to be both clean-

9 The word "Naturally," is here used for want of a better. That which we term Nature is no more than those first propensities, which are common to all. M.S.

ly and orderly; for tho' it is the fashion at present to make as much dirt and waste at table as possible, it cannot long be so if there is any sense left of decorum and œconomy. At their meals, (and when turned four years old at farthest they should be introduced to the table of their parents) let them be accustomed to neatness and method. The manner in which children conduct themselves at meals, shews the education of their parents; and as they should never be allowed to leave any thing upon their plates, as a means of teaching them to avoid waste, they should never be helped too largely at first.

Children are generally shy and timid, and attached to those they are most accustomed to, yet this sort of bashfulness, tho' amiable, is unpleasant both to their parents, and to others, and, if it grows up with them, injurious to themselves; it ought, therefore, to be removed at an early period, without destroying any of those amiable affections with which it is most commonly accompanied. The greatest care, however, should be taken to prevent their falling into the opposite extreme, for nothing can be more disgusting than bold, pert, impudent children; they often become weak and ignorant men, and

*Extremes
of
Timidity
&
Boldness
equally
to be avoided*

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disappoint the hopes of their mistaken, and foolish parents, who consider impudence as a mark of genius and talents.

*hurts
&
astones*

The sports and amusements of children should be active and invigorating, without being dangerous, and in these we should leave them much to themselves, for here reason will begin to unfold itself, and children to feel their own strength.

Toys

The playthings of children should be few, and not frequently changed; for no money is worse spent, than that which is laid out in expensive toys; they render children tickle, inconstant, and difficult to be pleased, always longing for something new, and fond of finery, show, and expence. I never see a toy-shop without thinking how much time and money are spent to make children good for nothing. Every thing which makes them seem bigger than they are, is pleasing to children. Imitation, and the love of feeling their strength, are among their first propensities, it is upon these that we are to fix their future education, and they are strong enough to be applied to any purpose. The future employments of children may be pictured in their playthings. A boy should have a wheel-barrow, a spade, a horse, a rake, a shovel, a waggon, a boat, or a

pen. The playthings of a girl are few and simple, and generally such as lead to her future occupations; a doll or a baby-house are both harmless and useful, because they accustom her to what she is afterwards to be taught—the management of a family. No good reason can be given why she should be restrained to amusements within doors; her health requires that she should frequently enjoy the air, and I see no cause why she should not be amused for a few years, at least, with a wheel-barrow and a spade, as well as a boy. The union of the feminine character with health and strength of constitution is by no means impossible; for what are generally called female accomplishments, are but specious modes of killing time, and sure methods of ruining health. All useless, or, as they are called, ornamental employments of the needle, should be forbidden, when they encroach on the time required for exercise.

Children should be compelled to part with their play-things readily to one another; it teaches them to be liberal and generous, but at the same time they should be accustomed to be content with those they have, and not to covet those of others; at least to return them readily when lent, and to know what is their

*To instil
liberal
&
content*

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own, and what belongs to another. Who that has studied the first feelings and desires of a child, can doubt that men are originally selfish, and that it is only by instruction, and commerce with the world, that the mind ever acquires ideas of benevolence, or attention to the good of others? yet, even benevolence is only a modification of selfishness, created by the relations of society. To procure pleasure and avoid pain being the object of every human being, it happens that the pleasures of some men are connected with those of their fellow-creatures, while those of others centre solely in themselves; this is all the difference between selfishness and benevolence, about which there has been so much controversy. In children, to whom self is every thing, and who have not yet learnt their connection with the rest of society, gross selfishness generally prevails over every other consideration, and will continue to do so, if they are not instructed, either by precept or example, to be pleased by giving pleasure to others, and can any man be amiable who pays no regard to the feelings and comforts of others? Can any man be amiable who is proud, greedy, and selfish—who never considers how any thing he is about to do will affect others, but merely how it

affects himself?—such a man, if he has great talents, may be great, but he can never be amiable.—Even after all that can be taught, every man is to himself a circle, whose *radii* all tend to the same centre, tho' its circumference touches others in many points. No man is an insulated being, and custom has in some, rendered acts of benevolence almost involuntary; they are not, however, independent of the principle of self-love, tho' the pleasure we derive from them is a sufficient compensation for any sacrifice.

To fatigue the minds of children at an early age, is both cruel and dangerous; it gives them a dislike to every thing they ought to admire, and ends in making them dull and stupid; I should therefore by no means advise that a child be taught the alphabet as a task, but as an amusement, and laid aside whenever he is tired. The old method of printed letters is much to be preferred to the loose ones of ivory; they are easily lost, and difficult to be understood, when not properly placed, and, on the whole, neither cheap nor convenient. A child ought never be forced to spell words to which it can affix no meaning; it is on this account that I should wish to banish from all spelling books, single, unconnected words;

*Young men
not to
fatigue*

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let them at first be as simple as possible, and lengthen progressively as the child's understanding advances, but let them always have some connected meaning, and never let him be forced to spell a word to which he is not already accustomed in conversation, or of which the meaning cannot easily be explained. The custom of making children repeat by heart, long pieces of poetry or prose, which they cannot possibly understand, has a most dangerous tendency; for by that means they acquire words without ideas, and learn to talk before they learn to think. Teaching them languages before they are of an age to comprehend them, has the same unhappy effect, it pleases the vanity of their parents, which is often the only thing considered; yet these little early wonders seldom become useful men or women; they acquire a fluency of words, a ready habit of prating, but generally skim the surface of things, and never examine any thing to the bottom; they may be very pleasant, occasional companions, but are seldom useful members of society. When able to put words together, there are so many ¹³⁰ amusing and instructive books for their use, which have been published within the last fifteen years, that there is no occasion to give them such trash 1357

as Mother Goose's Tales, or the History of Jack the Giant-killer; they lead to no useful purpose, and ought therefore to be for ever banished the nursery, where amusement and instruction should always be united. With children arrived at the age of five years, some regularity and method should be adopted as to the hours of instruction and play; every inducement should be held out, to make them come to their book, not as a painful drudgery, but as a pleasing employment, as the means of acquiring every thing they wish for, and to obtain that relaxation which they should be told, can never be granted till they have performed their duty. To reason with them in this manner, on the necessity of attending to their books, and to teach them that amusement is only the reward of diligence,³ will imprint on their tender minds, ideas of duty and regularity which can never otherwise be obtained, and will probably never be effaced. Man being composed of sensual appetites and rational faculties, ~~he~~ cannot always act in compliance with the latter only, he must sometimes be induced to exert them for the sake of indulging the former. The love of praise, and the desire of doing good, are certainly the purest motives of action, but they are too much

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so for children ; the sensual desires must be called in to the aid of virtue, and the love of play must be rendered subservient to instruction ; young people must sometimes be enticed to their duty by the promise of gross rewards, and the love of innocent amusement. Whoever thinks to conduct either men or children by reason alone, will find himself mistaken, and lose much of the good which he intended. A parent who neglects to avail himself of these means and opportunities for his infant's improvement, may wonder that the child is not all he expects of him, but if he reflects, he will easily discover who is to blame.

*the affections
to be
implanted*

Great pains should be taken to excite in children, as early as possible, the feelings of affection and regard for their parents and family, for tho' they may be afterwards weakened by a collision of interests, or the many bad passions which gain strength by a commerce with the world, yet it may sometimes happen, that these affections will be strong enough to resist the most violent temptations, and they will ever prove a source of satisfaction and comfort. Parents should therefore be cautious how they create jealousies or disputes among their children, by shewing

any unjust preference of one to the other. It is often remarked, that those who are ugly or deformed in their persons, are equally so in their temper;¹³¹ but we impute this to a wrong origin, when we lay it to the charge of nature; for it is in general to be attributed to the slights and insults they receive from those who ought to be kind and gentle to them, and pay them additional attention, on account of their infirmities. Tho' our children have all an equal claim to our affection, when they deserve it, yet it is impossible at all times, and in all things, to treat them equally alike. Nature, by sending into the world one before another, has instituted a difference, and society has sanctioned it, by preferring the eldest, not to the exclusion of the rest from our favor, or our fortune, but by a preference in some things of importance; there must be heads of families as well as of nations; the analogy of nature is confirmed by the experience of society,¹³² for where all are alike, there must be either confusion or dull uniformity. Tho' in theory it may seem plausible to make our children equal in all things, it is neither practicable, nor would it be useful. The experiment has been tried, and it is found that it lays the foundation for jealousy, envy, and discontent,

2d. *Haines says, "If a child have any defect in shape, let the defect be acknowledged, & be joked with at times." — And Mr. Thurston is agree with this advice. —*

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whenever the slightest deviation from the rule arises, and it is the sure way to make children miserable when they go out into the world, for there they will find things very unequally divided, and if they are not accustomed to it before hand, they will be rendered perpetually unhappy. Reason would have all things equal; nature makes many things unequal, and nature can never be wholly overcome by art, but will maintain the great principle of inequality.

inferiors
obedient
in
kindness

Children should be early taught to be mild and attentive to their inferiors, for the casual difference of birth is no ground for tyranny on the one hand, nor of servile submission on the other; and parents cannot more effectually corrupt the minds of their children, than by suffering them to ill-treat their inferiors; they are all fond of shewing their power, and will strike those who they think dare not strike again; but no such thing should be suffered, for if those of unequal condition are brought together, all inequality should be dismissed, and the son of the gentleman should learn to bear a blow from the son of a peasant, or he will soon become haughty, tyrannical, and cruel, and suited to no society but that of his inferiors. I am convinced that there are few

children who are not capable of being ^{taught} ~~thought~~ every thing that is good, but then it must be not merely by words, but by actions, by forming them early to habits of benevolence, liberality, and politeness.

7 One great purpose of education being the ¹⁸⁴ ~~the~~ ^{The Passions} control of the passions, we should be watchful ^{sh^d be con} to check the evil propensities of our children ^{watched,} before they become too strong, for a few years, ^{soil may} at a particular time of life, are of infinite im- ^{checked} portance. If young people are not properly ^{the same} instructed before the age of fifteen, little can ^{staged} be done afterwards to any good purpose. At a very early period they begin to make distinctions in things and persons, and from that time we ought to watch the direction and impulse of their minds. If a child of a year old has every thing given it which it wants, if it is constantly indulged, it will become hasty, impatient, and irascible; to counteract that propensity is all that can be expected at so early an age, but as their ideas expand, we must take every pains to watch over their natural dispositions, for tho' these cannot, in all instances, be controlled, they may be regulated by constant attention. The capacities and tempers of children tho' originally derived from nature are almost all capable of improvement

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by art and instruction. Let every attention, therefore, be given in the earlier years of children, when their own reason is weak, to guide and direct them by the reason of others, and to lay the ground-work of happiness for their future lives. It is not unusual to see children very clever at four or five years old, who are good for nothing after; the fact is, their parents were able to make them wonderful infants, but for any thing further, they had neither knowledge nor talents. All parents are not equal to the task of educating their children, for it requires an even temper, constant attention, great perspicacity, extensive knowledge, much leisure, and strong health.

*1. preservation
the love of
power, the
earliest prin-
ciples of the
man mind.*

The earliest propensities of mankind are self-preservation and the love of power; the first of these is shewn by the immediate impulse of a child to the breast of its mother, and the second by the propensity which all children have to take from each other; this natural love of power is variously modified in life, but still remains the same at the root; to moderate and restrain these propensities, is all that can be done by any system of education; for they neither can, nor ought to be wholly destroyed. There are two great and fatal mistakes in education, the one consists in sup-

posing that every thing depends on nature, and the other that every thing depends on art, and these mistakes originate in want of observation, and a love of system.

*Evils of
delay in
Education*

Few parents begin to educate their children till they are four or five years old, when their tempers are completely formed, and they then mistake for nature the effects of custom and early impressions, and endeavour to counteract them by improper means, instead of attempting to erase them by contrary impressions. Children, when left to themselves, generally do wrong, because their first notions tend to excess if they are not controlled, and consequently become hurtful to themselves and others; for this purpose, they require in their younger years, long and constant attention, and with this it is almost impossible that they should wholly disappoint our expectations. If a child is eager and impatient for every thing he sees, and it is constantly given to him, you must expect that he will never bear to be denied; if you suffer him to refuse every thing he is asked for, and to have every thing he wants, you must expect him to be selfish and illiberal; if you suffer him to strike or illtreat those beneath him with impunity, you must not wonder if he becomes proud,

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haughty, and impatient of control; if you never teach him to be gentle and affectionate, you must expect him to be coarse and cruel. Our involuntary impressions being much more lasting than those we receive by the exertion of the will, example is generally found to be stronger than precept; it is of infinite importance, therefore, that we never expect from our children that which we do not do ourselves, and that all things of importance which we enjoin, or forbid should be strengthened by the powerful authority of our own example.

noted
p. 244

the
origin of
evil
propensities

The evil propensities of human beings have been variously accounted for; the divine ascribes them, with pious faith, to original sin, derived from the transgression of our first progenitors; this is an easy solution of the difficulty, because nothing is required but to believe, yet to those who are accustomed to reflect more deeply, it appears neither rational nor convincing. The religious moralist, who differs little from the divine, attributes them to innate ideas, which reason is unable to counteract. These notions are the remains of that ridiculous philosophy which attempts to account for present appearances, by theoretical systems, rather than by practical experience. The doctrine of innate propensities to either good or evil, is even

more ridiculous than that of original sin, for ideas being formed only from sensible objects, can have no existence in a being who possesses not the means by which they are produced. The first ideas of an infant, are those of sensation; those of reflection succeed, and form what is called the mind of man. The tendency to excess, or love of power, is the first cause of all the evil which children either do or imagine of themselves, and where this is not restrained by their own reason, or the authority of others, it grows into custom, and remains with them to the end of their existence.

The great question of public or private education has been so often agitated, that little more can be added on either side, and all that can be said on the whole is, that in some cases the one is to be preferred, and in some the other. In general it may be affirmed that private education seems best in theory, and public has been proved to be the best in practice, and most conformable to the actual state of the world; and, after all, much depends on the mode in which children are treated by their parents at home, and on their own natural dispositions.¹³⁶ The evils inevitably attendant on public education are considerably increased by the negligence of parents in their choice of

*Public
or
Private
Education
caution*

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masters, and the improper method of teaching adopted in most public schools. It is surprising with how little consideration many parents trust their children to be educated by the most illiterate pretenders. A needy parson,³⁷ or a ruined gamester, have nothing to do to make a fortune, but to set up a school or an academy, to ask an immoderate price for their instruction, and the public papers, or public fame, will bear constant testimony to their success; and as this with most people is the only test of merit, the school increases and our youth are ruined. Whence does this arise but from the ignorance and indolence of parents in every thing relating to the instruction of youth? Ignorant parents send their children to ignorant teachers, and thus ignorance is propagated and preserved,³⁸ and a foundation laid for vice, bigotry, and fanaticism.

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*Defects
of the
present
system
of
educatⁿ*

The age at which children are sent to school, whose parents are either too indolent, too ignorant, or too much employed to undertake the task themselves, is from three to five, and there with much pain and difficulty, under some ignorant, impatient, unfortunate old being, whose necessities have reduced her to undertake the drudgery, they are taught to say their letters, not by the gentle, rational

method which nature dictates, but by force and severity, and if they do not become either stupid or obstinate, the parents are more indebted to chance than to themselves. After this is over,¹²² and in the course of two or three years hard service, they are taught to read their own language, they are sent to a grammar school, where they are compelled to repeat by rote a parcel of nonsensical verses they can never comprehend, and thus driven through all the perplexities of construing, and parsing, without having a single idea of what they are about. Can this be of any service to a boy, or is it not time mispent? But this is not enough; after all this jargon has been pretty well flogged into him, (for which it is impossible for him to see any reason but the arbitrary will of his master) he is compelled to read an author whom he cannot comprehend, and, therefore, most likely hates the sight of, for ever after, and never again returns to; at the end of all this drudgery, one boy in ten becomes what is called a good scholar, that is, he can construe Latin and Greek, and the rest are turned out incorrigibly stupid. All this may seem very proper to some people, because it has been the mode of instruction for three hundred years, but without they can give a

Dalton has lately published a Grammar founded on Forke's 'Diversions of Purley.'

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better reason for it, I should advise them to consider whether it is not adviseable to find out a simpler method of teaching boys the learned languages, and one more adapted to their infant ideas. For this purpose, the period of such instruction should be deferred till they are at least ten years old, and their time employed in learning things which are visible to their senses, ¹⁴⁰ instead of words which convey only refined ideas; and when they do begin to learn grammar, it should be plain, simple, and unencumbered with technical phrases and unintelligible jargon. Its rules should be simplified, and its examples adapted to the capacities of children. Let them be taught simply the three great divisions of time, or the tenses, past, present, and to come, and then with a dictionary, set to read some plain, intelligible author, adapted to their uninformed minds, but never let them be pushed forward quicker than they can comprehend. After this, their progress in the different branches of learning and knowledge must be left to the judgment of their instructors; my advice is only intended to teach how they are to be formed to virtue and morality.

1040

truth,
object
primary
instance
education.

The first thing to be impressed on the minds of children, after the dawn of their reason, is a strict attention to truth, and for this purpose

you should always tell the truth to them. — Whatever you wish them to do or to avoid, you ought to give the true reason for it, which in time, they will understand ; whereas a great many parents have a very improper custom of tempting a child to do or take a thing, by threatening them with giving it to another. This inducement has a strong tendency to make them selfish and ill-tempered, by teaching them to act from the mere desire of depriving another of what they do not care about themselves, which is a very contemptible motive. Children should be told at once, that they must do a thing, and necessity will soon teach them to submit to what they cannot resist. The custom of deceiving naturally produces deceit, for the faculties of most infants are very quick, and they more readily imitate what they see, than believe what they are told ; for the one they have proof positive, for the other they have only a bare affirmation. To shew them the true nature of things is of infinite service to them in other respects, as it saves them much trouble in their future lives.

There are
3 kinds
Truth
Truth is, or ought to be, the great end of all our researches, the constant guide of our conduct, and there are three kinds of truth, na-

Education

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tural, metaphysical, and moral. The first relates to the properties or qualities of bodies, the second, to the nature of our intellectual faculties, and the third regards our conduct towards each other. With the last only we are concerned at present, and even of this it is but a very small portion that we have it in our power to discover; for such is the limited nature of our faculties, and such our disposition to deceive each other, when we conceive it to suit our purpose, that we neither can know all things that have happened, nor even how they happened. There are some sort of lies which all men agree to reprobate, and it is these against which children are generally warned; yet, to advance the cause of truth, and to banish deceit and fraud, we must do much more than merely teach them never to tell a lie; ¹⁴¹ we must teach them neither wilfully to misrepresent, nor hastily to give credit to every thing they hear and read. To teach them to examine, is better than teaching them to believe, for both in the natural and moral world, facts are mistated, as well as the consequences to be drawn from them; so that a prudent caution in matters of belief is the best preservative against error and mistake. History is not always a faithful record of past

note
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transactions, and in the concerns of private life, we are for ever liable to be imposed on. Some men designedly, and others hastily, report things differently from what they really happened, so that it is requisite at all times to be upon our guard against mistake and fraud; yet this custom of doubting, when applied in private companies to small and trivial events, should always be avoided as rude and unmannerly. To hear and to believe are very different things; good manners may require the one, but truth and justice frequently forbid the other, and what we are not sure of we ought never to repeat; for nothing tends so much to the disturbance of private society, and the injury of individuals, as an over-anxiousness to believe and report what we have never examined.

Young people should be early accustomed to regularity and industry, for nothing contributes so much to the comfort of life, as to be always employed, and to manage all our concerns with method and arrangement. Idleness is the destruction of happiness and virtue, and that perpetual necessity for exertion, which our faculties require, for want of proper employment, finds its last resource in gaming and debauchery. Constant exercise, either of body

*Regularity &
Industry
recommended*

Education

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or mind, is requisite to preserve them from dissipation and vice, for the neglect of a proper application of their faculties, by forming in our early years industrious and active dispositions, leads ultimately to that excess of profligacy which young men of rank and fortune notoriously excel in. Young persons of both sexes cannot be too early taught to feel and understand that industry is its own reward, and idleness its own punishment, that œconomy is the true source of liberality, and that no man who does not regulate both his time and his money with strict order, can be either truly just or generous, and that the essence of œconomy is to attend to little things, without being parsimonious. The more numerous the sources of employment and relaxation we provide for young people, the greater their chance of happiness. Agriculture affords a never-failing supply of pleasure and engagement. A taste for the liberal arts is a constant fund of recreation and delight, and even the mechanical arts are not beneath the occupation of a gentleman, at the same time that they procure both health and employment. Nothing which is not positively vicious can be disgraceful, for a man of liberal education and polished manners will give a degree of respectability to what-

ever he undertakes, and may remove the prejudices which are attached to things not essentially, nor positively dishonorable.

Whoever wishes his children to be well educated, should leave them as little as possible to servants; were they even qualified for the task, he cannot expect from them that constant fidelity and attention which children require, for without intending any insult to the lower ranks of the people, I will maintain that they are not so well instructed as the slaves of the Greeks and Romans. They are, therefore, little suited to be the constant companions of children; they either treat them with foolish indulgence or barbarous severity, when young, which equally ruin their tempers, and when older, they spoil them by flattery and servility; but at any time they can teach them nothing suited to form their minds and hearts. The generality of parents either neglect their children entirely, and leave them to the care of hirelings, or treat them in every respect improperly, and then lay the blame on their natural dispositions. One of the many bad things which are learnt from servants is that of making idle excuses for improper things; children should never be suffered to say, "I only did so and so," for if wrong applied,

*The coil
of leave
Child
with
Scrow*

nde, Vita di Alfieri, scritta da esso Vol. 1,

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only is a dangerous word, and will serve to excuse any thing; it has brought many a man to the gallows and the hulks.

confidence
liberality
undid on
reason to
practised If children are taught to use their reason early, and instructed by consequences and examples, they will soon perceive their own faults, and correct them even without advice; and nothing can be so delightful to a parent, as to see the effect of his instructions thus incontestibly proved. Children cannot be too soon treated with confidence and liberality; they should be frequently employed on little commissions, and always rewarded when they perform them punctually, and the sooner these rewards are applied to the mind, the better; for they inspire a degree of manliness and dignity which it is very possible to unite with the utmost degree of simplicity; to be a man in great things, and a child in little ones, is a considerable point gained. I have seen many boys of ten years old, who were neither to be tempted nor rewarded by toys and sweetmeats.

is over
cranal
anity in
hew &c It is easy to give children a taste for dress by telling them how well they look when they get a new coat or a hat; but by taking no notice of these things, or considering them as trifles, children will do so to; thus they may be pre-

served from that most contemptible of all passions—vanity. Vain parents make vain children, and the measure of the father's mind will always be that of the son's, if they have been much together. Vanity in trifles is contemptible, in great things it is pitiable, for it lessens the value even of the highest characters; yet vanity is to a certain degree in every man's heart, tho' some men conceal it better than others, and it is only in excess that it becomes offensive.

Nothing is more disagreeable in children than affectation and conceit; yet there are some parents not displeased to see their children put on little airs and follies, which they think make them agreeable; such children may please those who prefer plenty of noise and shew, to sterling worth, but good judges of life, like good judges of painting, will prefer chastity and simplicity of coloring to the glare of false ornament. Affectation in a man is contemptible, in a woman it is pitiable, for it generally fails to obtain its purpose. Addison justly remarks, that it is a greater enemy to a fine face than the small-pox, and tho' its object is admiration, it is more generally laughed at than admired.

Let it not, however, be forgotten, that while

*affectation
& conceit
odious*

*strength,
presence
of mind
not to be
overlooked*

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young men are to be formed to all the tender and amiable virtues, they ought not to be destitute of that strength and presence of mind which is requisite in some degree for the common occasions of life, but without which it is impossible to conquer great and uncommon difficulties. Those who are nursed in indolence and pleasure¹⁴⁴ are little qualified for arduous undertakings, and no man ever became great, who was not early inured to hardships and dangers.

*severity,
leads to
concealment.
wrong
behaviour.* Severity with children leads to concealment, dissimulation, and lying; we too often forget their age, and suppose them to know many things of which they are ignorant; it is not to be supposed that a child should always do right, after being once told that a thing is wrong; impressions can only be durable by repetition, and they who expect children to be, all at once, what they should be, expect an impossibility. After the first admonition, if a child offends again, most parents lose their patience, and correct severely; this naturally leads the infant to be more cunning, that it may prevent discovery in future. Instead of this, a parent should say, "Confess your fault, tell me that you have done so and so, and I will forgive you, but never tell a lie."

This kind of generosity naturally induces the child to reason on the nature of the offence he has committed, while the other method only leads him to think how he may best prevent detection; for the strongest propensity in the human mind is resistance to oppression, either by force or fraud; we compel children to do wrong, and then blame them for the consequence of our own conduct. The natural result of reason is reason; but the result of force is obstinacy or villainy.—The answer to all this from many parents, is, “Oh, such a child will not do without severity;” when the fact is, that, having begun with severity, the child is then spoilt, and requires to be coarsely treated, because he has been used to act solely from the fear of punishment.

It is of infinite importance in the education of young persons of either sex, to teach them to despise every thing mean and ungenerous; for there is nothing in human shape more odious and contemptible, than those smooth, fulsome, and insinuating people, who say one thing to your face, and another behind your back, just as it suits their paltry interest. Such people have generally a great degree of pitiful, low curiosity; they are anxious to pry into other people's concerns, and secret about their

*of words
Flatter
Flatter*

own; they give an ill-natured interpretation to every little failing, however pardonable, but smooth it over with some soft speech, which only makes their design more obvious; they sicken at the prosperity of others, while they pretend to rejoice; they insinuate, where they dare not accuse; they hesitate to express their dislike, and pretend to pity where they mean to blame; their praise is more blighting than the mildews of a frost, for when they wish completely to destroy a character, they preface their attack with terms of general approbation and regard; they are subtle, artful, and designing, the least thing they say or do, has a remote tendency to their own advantage. Men and women (for they are mostly to be found among the weaker sex,) of this sort should be held up and exposed to the abhorrence and contempt of young persons, as soon as they are capable of making distinctions in human characters; for this strongest of all reasons, that such people generally make their children like themselves, and the evil is extended from generation to generation to the remotest branches of a family.

Evils in Condition no effort remedy. Yet, after all that education can do in forming the mind, such is the frailty and fallibility of our nature, that no man can be all that he

ought to be, nor is he secure at any period of his life against the effect of circumstances, which may produce a change in his disposition or sentiments. Even principles which seemed to be proof against the force of every temptation, have been known to yield to the seductions of flattery or interest; but this is no argument against the necessity of fortifying the mind by education, to resist the most powerful attacks, and to prepare it to act rationally and honestly; for tho' the world is full of meanness, selfishness, fraud, deceit, and treachery, and tho' a man who has lived any time in it, must know that there is hardly any such thing as consistent integrity, yet he will not, on that account, give it up in despair, nor exclaim that it cannot be improved. He will use, to the utmost of his power, the means of which he is possessed, to implant more liberal principles in the rising generation, and endeavour to revive in the breasts of his posterity, those free and independent sentiments which were once the distinction of Britons; he will endeavor to counteract, by every means in his power, the blighting influence of luxury and commerce, which sets every thing to sale, and makes a market even of honesty and liberty; he will endeavour to animate the

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hearts of future ages, with that high spirit of purity and independence, which despises the sordid pursuits of interest, and delights only in virtuous and liberal gratifications. The original purpose of instructing young men in classical literature, was to keep alive that proud spirit of liberty which formed the glory of Rome and Athens, and has communicated a portion of its vigor to modern times; that purpose seems now to be forgotten, the classics are read with calm indifference, and those who best understand them, are neglected or treated with contempt. The sciences and imitative arts, which contain nothing either favorable or adverse to liberty, are supported and patronized, tho' by no means animated with their spirit nor if they were could it gain them either patronage nor promotion. For this partiality, it is not difficult to account, yet I heartily wish to see the ground of complaint removed, and our modern youth study classical literature, not as a mechanical drudgery, but for its high and dignified utility. Liberty and the arts may exist without each other, but liberty and literature must fall or flourish together.

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The religious principles of young people are next to be considered, and it is my opinion, that, in a matter of so much uncertainty as re-

ligion, about which the best and the greatest men have differed, and do differ, it is unfair to give any system of belief so great an advantage over others, as that which is derived from early impressions. At first, therefore, let them be taught nothing but the plain principles of reason and justice, for these are common to all men, and at all times and places equally true and intelligible. If young men, after they are arrived at an age to judge for themselves, give a preference to any particular religion, let them embrace it and act upon it; if not, provided they are just, generous, and humane, it is of little consequence what they believe or disbelieve.

The studies of some men occupy much of their time, and more perhaps than is either useful or healthy. I am by no means anxious, therefore, that young people should spend too much time over their books, for the great art of reading is to select, and the great use of reading is to make men better and happier; for this purpose, it is not requisite to turn over many volumes, but to acquire a thorough knowledge of principles. To be well-grounded in any branch of science is of more consequence, than to read many books without method or arrangement. To simplify know-

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ledge is doing a greater service to mankind than to conquer kingdoms, and to make an abridgement with discretion, is as useful as to clear a country ; for every branch of science is over-run with books, and he that writes one to supersede many, does more good than he that writes a hundred. I have no wish to detract from the merits of those who have detailed either facts or opinions on any interesting subject, I only speak of the services of those who have collected the substance of other men's researches, and formed them into a compact and intelligible analysis. Life is too short, and books are too numerous, for any man to read the third part of all that has been written on any given subject ; wherever, therefore, young men have it in their power, it is my earnest advice to them, to take advantage of the shortest road to knowledge, and be more anxious to gather facts than opinions. Learning, tho' a valuable acquirement, is inferior in utility to good sense ; the two united form a rare composition of excellence ; were I to be asked whether I would have my son a learned or a sensible man, I should be a fool if I hesitated how to answer.

Books. "A great book is a great evil," and "Of making many books there is no end." Few

books there are that might not have been written in half their present space. Had printing been discovered before the æra of christianity, it would have made a great difference in the world, we should now have had many valuable books that are lost, and many that we now have would never have been written; the multitude of volumes which have been composed merely to settle the text of the classics, would happily have been spared; christianity itself would probably never have gained ground in the world, and reason would have prevailed over religion.

The expences of young men require to be early regulated, so as to give them ideas of moderation and œconomy. In this, as in all other things, we must begin by making strong impressions; for tho' I am far from denying that all impressions are liable to be destroyed by their contraries, yet the probability is so much in favour of those which are received in early years, that every parent is guilty of culpable neglect, who omits taking that advantage which the nature of the human mind affords him. Young people, therefore, as soon as they know the use of money, should have it given to them very sparingly, tho' not meanly, for all extremes are bad, and avarice

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is worse than extravagance; but, above all, they should be compelled to account for every sixpence they lay out, tho' not harshly nor severely, for we must not expect them to be prudent all at once; it is a work of time and experience. Severity is, perhaps, a greater fault than indulgence, for it drives them to concealment and fraud, lessens that confidence which ought always to subsist between parents and children, makes them hate those whom they ought to love, and engenders sentiments of misanthropy and indifference.

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amusement
is given*

Another dangerous indulgence to children is that of amusement. Nothing dissipates and enervates the mind so much, as constant relaxation; young people who are early accustomed to be frequently in company and at public diversions, seldom spend their time afterwards to any good purpose; they become utterly incapable of any serious employment, and acquire a degree of frivolity and insignificance in their whole turn of mind and behaviour, which can never afterwards be corrected; they talk more, perhaps, than others of their own age, but less to the purpose, and are remarkable throughout their lives for vanity and impertinence; yet their parents look on them as models of excellence, and

despise the modesty of genuine merit. The world, however, judges more coolly, and such young people are generally considered by those whose opinion is of most weight, as empty and troublesome coxcombs, hardly worth contempt.

The greatest confidence and freedom, consistent with respect, ought always to subsist between parents and their children, for nothing alienates affection so much as reserve, dictation, and severity; when a father expects, after a child is arrived at years of discretion, that every thing he says should be received by his son with implicit submission, he may succeed in enforcing his authority, but he loosens for ever the stronger tie of affectionate respect. Parents should reason with their children, after they have arrived at a certain age, and thus strive to open and improve their faculties; this will not weaken parental authority, when it is conducted with moderation and temper, and may be of service to both parties, nor can it tend to unsettle any important opinions, for the foundations of truth are so solid, as not to be easily shaken. All opinions which will not bear to be disputed, are of little worth, and there is no disposition of mind so desirable as that fearlessness which leads men to seek after

*Confidence
Freedom
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between
a father & son*

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truth, without any regard to consequences, and that liberality which teaches them to acknowledge that they have been deceived.

The custom of bringing young persons too much into company, has been already condemned, yet it must not be inferred from thence, that it is improper for them ever to mix in society; even in their earliest years, children should be accustomed to strangers, and by this means they will avoid all pain and confusion in mixed companies. Nothing this world can afford is more desirable than good society; when children are never used to company, they become shy and reserved, and averse to mix with the world; let them then be taught to love society, yet not to avoid being alone, for tho' it is right that those who are intended to live much in the world, should mix frequently in company, yet the truest enjoyment of society is only to be found in a small and well-chosen circle of friends. The company of young men should be generally of their own rank, but rather above than beneath them; both extremes are bad, tho' the worst is that which makes them fond of low company, for the sake of taking liberties; on the other hand, to court great people, is mean and contemptible, and generally ends in vexation and disappointment.

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It is of great consequence to make young people act and judge from principle, and this can only be gained by teaching them to exercise their judgment, rather than be governed by passion or opinion, or rely on the authority of others; for this purpose, a boy ought to give a reason for every thing he does, and such a one as will bear to be examined, for, after he has arrived at the age of ten or fifteen years, it is not enough for him to say of any thing material, "I do so, because I am told it is right, or because I have read it in a book;" he must know why it is right, and why it is wrong to do otherwise, or he cannot be considered a moral agent, for all moral right and wrong are founded on the relations of men to each other, as members of society; this is a reason which all men can feel and comprehend. It is of no small importance to know the true value of every object and pursuit, and not to give more for any thing than it is worth. Let young people, therefore, read Dr Franklin's story of the whistle. To teach them to reason with accuracy on the state of things around them, to form just and liberal notions of their relative situation in society, and to govern their passions with regularity, are the great objects of education; when these

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are once acquired, all that is afterwards requisite is, to preserve, by reading and conversation, the same tenor of mind and sentiment; and I much question, whether after sound principles are more generally diffused among mankind, great part of our present learning will not be thrown aside, and our knowledge considerably compressed. To employ our time usefully and pleasantly is the great art of life; some men are too much devoted to their pleasures to think of their interest, and some are too intent upon their interest, to have any other pleasure. Reason prescribes an equal portion of both, and moderation in all things is the law of enjoyment. Reading, with the mere view of amusement, is not more defensible nor honorable, than horse-racing and many other sports, and if it makes no impression on the mind or heart, can lay little claim to the praise of utility. Even the higher pursuits of intellect, if they have no influence on the conduct, are no more than specious idleness; to dive into the mysteries of metaphysics and divinity, is not better than stuffing birds or preserving butterflies; nor is there any merit in being a mere Greek scholar; tho' to acquire such a knowledge of any language as may enable us to read books which contain all

the treasures of poetry, history and oratory, and thereby to strengthen and improve our minds, is an employment becoming a rational being, and tending to the best of purposes. A want of method and system in study is the greatest obstacle to improvement, young persons should, therefore, be early accustomed to a regular disposition of their time and pursuits, and not be suffered to fly from one book or one thing to another with thoughtless rapidity; they should also be taught never to read without some other end in view than mere amusement; they should ask themselves, before they begin a book, what good they are likely to acquire from it, and when they have finished, they should sum up all that they have gained.

Novels, when well written, contain much knowledge of life and manners, and tho' proscribed by some men who have neither taste nor imagination, are capable of doing much good, and of exciting both noble and refined emotions; they exercise the judgment, and interest the heart, and when they are animated pictures of real life, written for the purpose of displaying the miseries of vice, the dangers of the passions, and the luxury of feeling, they may be considered as teachers of morality, little

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inferior to living instructors. I speak not of that loathsome trash which issues from the hot-bed of the circulating libraries in London, and is disseminated through those of the country, to the destruction of taste, morals, and happiness, which resembles nothing in either art or nature, which paints only the illusions of love, and gives romantic ideas of happiness. Such books have neither the merit of variety, nor originality, they are stale copies of each other, and so much alike, that he who reads one reads them all; yet they perpetually reappear under new names, to excite the cloyed appetites of love-sick virgins and romantic swains. They may be permitted to amuse the languor of old age, but they should never be suffered to spoil the unvitiated minds of youth; for they resemble those filthy compositions under the name of sweetmeats, which pall without satisfying the appetite, and render it incapable of digesting solid food. The great danger even of good novels, is that of weakening the judgment, by too great an indulgence of the imagination.

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Novels are not the only species of reading which require judgment in selection, for every other branch of study is overloaded with books, and most books are overloaded with useless

ideas; when the opinions of men are firmly settled, on the distinction between useful and superfluous knowledge, many volumes which have long been held in estimation will be laid aside. Alchymy and astrology have now ceased to perplex the minds of men, and divinity, it is to be hoped, will never disturb the next generation. All books of religion, particularly books of piety and devotion, are just so much nonsense, for their object exists solely in the imagination. In the department of poetry, above every other, there is much trash, which may be usefully forgotten. The studies of young men when thus relieved of incumbrances, will henceforth be directed only to useful purposes.

To improve a young man's mind and taste, it is of great use to him to read books on education and criticism; the former teach him the utility of instruction, and make him feel desirous of improvement, and the latter, provided they are written on just principles, give him a desire to read the works that are criticised, and enable him to judge of their faults and excellencies; yet, at the same time, he should have the best models in every species of writing put into his hands, and read those only at first; when his taste is formed, he may be al-

*Books on
Education
& Criticism
advantageous
to read.*

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lowed to read inferior productions. History ought to be the first and principal study of young people, but it must be rendered palatable to them by a proper selection, for the books which are generally given to them are so dry and tedious, that they more frequently disgust, than either amuse or improve. Let their first historical books be mere abridgements, such as give a faint outline of great events, and having thus placed before them a general notion of the history of different countries, let it afterwards be filled up by original accounts, written by persons who lived in the times of which they write, for such books generally excite all the interest of novels, and have the advantage of truth on their side. Many of these books will bear to be abridged, and, after that, one page of authentic history is worth all the romances of Hume, Robertson, or Gibbon ; for history, in the hands of such men, becomes either a fable or a dissertation, and sometimes both ; the characters are filled up by their own imaginations and predilections, and the sentiments are in general the prejudices they have acquired on particular persons or events. Such history may amuse, but it cannot improve, for it is only a partial representation of past transactions, and of such his-

tories we have many, which place the same affairs in different lights, according to the historian's prejudices; they are like pictures of events drawn from the painter's imagination, which are amusing, if well written, if not, they do more harm than good; but if they are like Rapin, Rollin, or Smollet, I should as soon think of giving a boy the statutes at large to read, for they are not more tedious and dry.

The deceitfulness of history is a just complaint with those who wish to acquire a true knowledge of past affairs; it is every where so deformed by the prejudices and partialities of historians, that it presents a labyrinth in which it is more difficult to find the truth than to discover the art of making gold, which many men think they have found out, yet can never be repaid for the search. *The fa of the*

The great purpose of history being to instruct by examples, it is of the utmost consequence that it be written with a scrupulous attention to truth, and that it be free from the prejudices of party. Without this, it may amuse and mislead, but it can never teach the generality of the world to form a right judgment of the facts which it presents to their examination, and without men think for themselves, when they read a recital of past events, *in the 2. str.*

they might as well save themselves the trouble of reading at all, and take the representation of them at once from the light in which they are placed by others. Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, are called philosophic historians; they are philosophers, it is true, and they are men of great talents, yet they are any thing but historians; for history is a simple relation of facts, and theirs is a pompous display of rhetoric, where simplicity and veracity are alone required. Who would think of comparing them with Herodotus, Thucydides, or Xenophon? yet these were considered as the fathers of history—the models of pure writing. The motives of men in private life are at all times difficult to be discovered, they are much more so in public, yet there is not one of our philosophic historians who does know to a tittle, the spring and source of every man's actions, and according as they wish to represent him, they attribute every part of his conduct to such or such a motive; for all this, if two or three of them undertake to describe the same character, they all give him different motives, according to their own preconceived opinions. No stronger proof can be given of what I have here said, than the different characters given of Martin Luther by different historians.—

Hume represents him as a man actuated originally by no honest regard to truth, but being of an irritable and violent temper, first impelled to attack the corruptions of the church of Rome by an affront offered to the religious order he belonged to, in transferring the sale of indulgences from the Austin to the Dominican friars. His subsequent conduct he attributes to the love of fame, and the glory of dictating the religious faith and principles of thousands. There appears here nothing very amiable or honorable in his character or motives; but if we look at Robertson, we shall find him represented as a man actuated only by the disinterested love of truth, the undaunted champion of true religion, the man raised up by Providence for the light and instruction of the rest of mankind. The reason of this difference is obvious; Hume thought too meanly of human nature, and Robertson perhaps too highly, so that both were in the wrong. Cotemporary historians are not always free from the violence of party prejudice, they often represent the same facts differently; in this case, all that a writer of general history can do, is, to select those facts which are related nearly in the same manner, and endeavor to reconcile their accounts in those respects

in which they differ. He has no more to do than to compose a clear, candid, and consistent narrative, and to leave his readers to form their own judgment as to the motives of those whose conduct he relates; by this means his history will become a faithful register of past transactions, which is all that is required for instruction and amusement. To display acuteness of intellect and elegant stile, remains for historical dissertation, for that species of writing which expressly belongs to philosophers, and which is certainly of infinite utility, but it should be kept separate from history. The early part of ancient history is mere fable, mere imagination; not only the origin of particular nations, but the origin of the world, has been invented, and almost every country has its own theology, and its own cosmogony. Almost all that we read under the name of history, is little better than fable, and even that which is authentic, can represent great men but in a few points of view. A painter can give but one look of the person whom he wishes to represent, and, in many respects, an historian can do no more. Sully, we are to suppose, has given a faithful account of many parts of Henry's character, because he bears, as a writer, many marks of veracity;

but who will say that Henry is thoroughly understood? How could Tacitus be acquainted with all the facts he relates, even tho' they happened in his life time? Livy wrote chiefly from tradition, or from very uncertain memorials, and the greatest part of his history is no better than romance. Yet, tho' history is defective as a record of particulars, I do not deny that it may faithfully represent facts or characters in general; for instance, that Nero was a tyrant, or Antoninus a mild philosopher, or that such an event happened at the battle of Pharsalia; but so far does my scepticism extend, that I will trust it for little more than a general display of facts, not for a detail of minute particulars, which must ever remain in uncertainty. On the whole, history is but a dreary recital of follies and crimes, and its only use is to make us wiser by past experience.

The prevailing fault of education in the present times, is that of making boys too soon men; parents are pleased to see their children forward, as they call it, and they mistake premature and unripe advancement for the strength and vigor of maturity. Our youth are children only in knowledge, and men in every species of vice and impudence. They are introduced to public diversions, when they should

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be at their private studies; they are taken into company, when they should be playing at home; they are taught to game and drink, before they are instructed in any of their duties as men and citizens. Compare the modest simplicity and diffidence of a boy who has been properly kept back, with the pert, forward, conceited ignorance of these baby men, and then let a father, who is possessed of common prudence, determine which he should wish for his son; the choice is easy, and the means are not difficult. Let a boy, who is meant to be a worthy member of society, be kept from the knowledge of vice as long as nature will permit; let him be brought up with a constant abhorrence of profligacy and debauchery; let them never be familiar to him, nor lightly spoken of, and then, tho' he may sometimes yield to the force of nature, he will never glory in his shame, nor boast of vice with the confidence which belongs only to virtue: he will pardon the errors of others, and blush for his own, but he will never suffer the impulse of a physical necessity to mature into custom, nor give himself up to those pursuits which have neither nature nor appetite to plead for their excuse, and are the mere effects of idleness and bad company.

The design of education being not to dis-
 guise, but to improve nature, we should, in all
 our instructions, take her for our guide, for
 without this, tho' we should succeed in making
 children accomplished, we neither can make
 them useful nor amiable. The great difficulty
 is, to find out where nature is to be followed
 and where controlled. Education resembles an
 artificial landscape; nature is the ground-work
 of both, and in both she must be heightened,
 restrained, improved, adorned, and cultivated.
 The indulgence of the passions is the great
 motive of all our actions, yet, without they are
 directed to proper objects, and restrained with-
 in proper limits, they become the cause of evil
 and misfortune to ourselves and others. So-
 ciety, without them, would be a scene of in-
 sipid monotony, and without they are limited,
 a scene of misery and tumult. Men who,
 either from the effects of education, or a selfish
 regard to their own interest, perpetually dis-
 guise their passions and feelings, destroy all
 mutual confidence, and neither themselves en-
 joy, nor impart to others, the happiness of
 social beings; while, on the other hand, they
 who are too open and coarse in expressing
 these emotions, equally disturb the harmony
 and decorum of society.

*The great
 object of
 Education
 is to
 improve
 nature*

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Judgment
but call's
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crime. Young people cannot be too early taught to exercise their judgment; parents should dictate to them very sparingly, and never but when, from their tender age, it is impossible for them to distinguish, between two things of opposite natures, which is right. The great use of reason is to discriminate; to separate truth from error is the great art of life, and this can never be acquired by implicitly following the judgment of others. The more every man's judgment is left to its own exertion, the more likely that man is to discover some particle of truth, which may add to the general light, and dispel the mists of error, for on every subject there is darkness; much yet remains to be discovered, and much must be for ever hid, for the mind of man is not equal to fathom the universe.

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be taught
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of for
themselves. Let young persons learn as soon as possible to do every thing they can for themselves, even to think for themselves. Advice, may sometimes be requisite, and if they are modest, and properly conscious of their own weakness, they will ask it when they are at a loss; yet such advice by no means supersedes the exercise of their own judgment. Let them read for themselves, and select for themselves, when they have arrived at the age of twelve

or thirteen, and let them read without prejudice or prepossession. If they have been properly educated before they arrive at that age, they may read without danger, for nothing strengthens the judgment like exercise.

The rules and advice which have here been given for the education of children, differ much, from any thing which has hitherto been proposed; they may not be generally adopted, till time has reconciled men to their novelty, for education, at present, depends on the state of society; when the state of society depends on education, both will probably be improved. Education now receives the impulse which it ought to give, and submits to the necessity which is imposed on it by things of inferior moment. Every thing valuable in the existence of men and states, depends on the formation of the youthful mind, and yet that formation is generally left to the control of chance, rather than guided by design and method. The republic of Sparta affords a proof how much education can do in forming the state of society, for the manners, laws, and customs of that singular people were all changed, in a few years, by education; but it will be said, that there the instruction of youth was public and uniform, and consequently

*novels
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must effect its purpose more rapidly than when left to the will of individuals. To this it may be answered, that tho' in Sparta every thing public originated from the powerful mind of one man, and consequently the effects of that advice were likely to be more immediately felt than in the present state of society, when every individual, by means of the press, is left to form his own judgment, and to address himself, if he pleases, to that of others; yet the effect of this difference, tho' slow, is no less sure, for when just principles of education are once adopted, their operation must be regular and extensive.

*the benefits
resulting from
consideration
public
affairs—*

It is of the greatest consequence both to individuals and the public, that young men of all ranks above the lowest should learn early to take an interest in public affairs, for nothing tends so much to elevate the mind above the petty squabbles and contentions of private life as to be interested in public characters and concerns, nor does any thing afford so constant a source of occupation and amusement. It will not by any means follow that men in private life should interfere too much in public concerns, nor neglect their own—it is only great occasions that require the exertion of public spirit in public men, but every man

may feel an interest in discussing public affairs in private, and every man ought, if he can do it without heat or animosity. It may be said that did men neglect to criticise and discuss the conduct of each other in private, the great check or control of public opinion would be removed from private conduct, and virtue or vice would become a matter of indifference. I say no. Let men avoid the society of the vicious when their conduct becomes notorious, and this will be a much more effectual restraint upon vice than any which exists at present, for it is by no means uncommon for those who abuse each other both justly and unjustly behind their backs, to be civil and even sneaking to them in their presence, so that detraction enjoys its utmost scope without producing the smallest benefit to society, while it ruins the characters of individuals without any regard to their guilt or innocence. To speak the truth is not scandal, tho' it may be libel, and as every honest man ought to guard against propagating falsehood, so he ought never to hesitate about telling what he knows to be true, whether in public or private. It is a bad maxim to teach young men to make their feelings and their principles on all occasions subservient to their interest,—prudence

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requires that we should often get the better of our feelings, but that which the world calls prudence, is only a mean accommodation to interest.—Principle is the first thing in every man's character, and interest should wait upon principle, not principle upon interest.

*University
recommended
a medium
between Control
Liberty.*

Having thus prepared a young man to encounter the dangers of the world, I should advise that he be sent to an university, as a state between entire liberty, and the control he must submit to, under parental authority; in which, before he goes out into the world, he may find sufficient temptations to exercise his virtue, and sufficient restraints to preserve him from vice, if he avails himself of the excuse which those restraints will afford; where he will be able to hear and converse with men eminent, in every science, and to have his emulation excited by the hopes of reward, and the desire of avoiding contempt; where he will find the most powerful motives to call forth his activity of mind, to rouse his dormant powers, and to learn his relative situation compared with those around him, and where, in fine, he will perceive that all his future respectability and success must depend on his own exertions; that the time for preparation is short, and must be speedily improved. Be-

fore a young man can feel all this, our universities must be very different from what they are at present; their forms, their modes of instruction, and their teachers, must be new-modelled.

The education of young women, tho' not particularly mentioned, has not been forgot in the preceding remarks, and as all that has been hitherto said, applies equally to them as to the other sex, except what relates to manly exercises and professional studies, there is little need to repeat the sentiments already expressed. The same, perhaps, has been said before by former writers, yet it is not, till lately, that the education of women has been thought of, as beings equally capable with men of mental improvement, nor are they even now so generally well educated as they deserve, or as they ought to be, for the sake of their families, when it is considered that to them, in the early part of their lives, the formation of their children's minds is generally entrusted. It has already been remarked how much of the temper and talents of a child depend on its early impressions, it is, therefore, a matter of the utmost importance that a mother be qualified and disposed to attend to those things which, tho' apparently trifles, so ma-

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terially concern the future disposition of a child, for, in every thing that relates to the education of children, unless the intentions of a father are seconded by those of the mother, he must either engage in a painful struggle for superiority, or totally abandon the expectations he had formed from any particular mode of education ; for what he does, she will undo, and the children, from the opposite advice they receive, will be in danger of becoming totally spoiled. An additional motive is here offered for the most liberal education of daughters ; but one should think that no other could be wanting, than the comfort we might derive from a similarity of sentiment with those whom nature has formed to be our most intimate companions and our tenderest friends, and that the bond of reason should strengthen the ties of affection, and make us esteem those whom it is our duty and our greatest pleasure to admire. The female character, when strengthened by the cultivation of the mind, in addition to the attractions of the person, forms a happy union of energy and sweetness, which renders it irresistible to men of sense and refinement, and the greatest happiness the married state can bestow, is the union of minds inspired by similar ideas ; such, however, is

rarely to be found, and can only be rendered more frequent by an attention to the education of females. Frivolous accomplishments are at present too much attended to, and women are not sufficiently attentive to their health; their employments are too sedentary, and their exercise too gentle. I by no means recommend manly amusements; yet frequent exposure to the air, and carefully to avoid whatever tends to relax, to weaken, to enervate, are requisite to preserve health for any long period. Boarding schools are the ruin of female constitutions, minds, and morals, and require to be completely reformed, if at all to be tolerated; yet in my opinion, the attention of an accomplished mother, or a governess at home, with the advantage of frequently being in company, are sufficient to give young women every requisite degree of polish; and without the solid *stamina* of virtuous principles, all external accomplishments are but gilded treachery. I am no stranger to human nature, tho' I have not lived much in the world, and I hesitate not to say, that too frequent intercourse between the sexes, and too much company, are dangerous for young women. Prudence and modesty are indispensable to female excellence; they contain all the good that females

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can contribute to society. The most that can be expected from the best education, is to increase the number of the wise and virtuous; to make all mankind so is impossible by this means, tho' the power of the vicious may not be wholly overcome, it will be considerably lessened, and many serious evils corrected and reformed.

A FEW WORDS ON THE
BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

THE British constitution is the result of gradual experience, it is a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, which some men have called the completion of human wisdom, and others a mere compound of folly. The fundamental principle on which it rests, is older than the Saxons, for the right of the people to deliberate personally in all public affairs, can be traced to the Germans. Whether the people were represented in the Saxon Wiltanagemet has been much disputed among antiquarians, and it is now merely an antiquarian question, for the right rests not on its antiquity but on its justice. I am inclined to think that the Saxon senate was partly representative. The distinct powers which belong to the three different branches of which our government is composed, are the result of time and information, tho' it is somewhat sin-

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gular that they were almost as accurately defined before the Norman conquest as they have ever been since, and all that has been subsequently gained is chiefly the restitution of the antient Saxon laws and government—for William the Norman wished to render himself arbitrary and so did his successors, but such was the spirit of the people and the power of the barons, that they forced from one of the fiercest tyrants of the Norman race, the restoration of that representative government which is the foundation of our liberty.* The first power in the British government is the people, for them are the laws enacted by their representatives, by the lords, and by the crown, and of these three powers does the constitution consist. The king possesses a double or mixed power, it is chiefly executive, but partly legislative, inasmuch as his sanction is requisite to the formation of the laws. The power of the lords is judicial as well as legislative. The representation of the people is the fundamental article of the constitution, the lords may be voted useless, and the king may be dethroned, but the people can never be annihilated, and to be free they must be freely represented.—

the people

King

Lords

Parliament

* v. Magna Charta, cap. 14.

The king may in some cases temper the severity of the law by the exercise of mercy, but the House of Commons alone, can redress the grievances of the people, *or become their greatest grievance*; they are the grand inquest of the nation for relieving the wants, and removing the oppressions of the people; it is their duty and privilege to impose such burdens on them as may be requisite for their internal government and external defence, and to see that these contributions are honestly employed. Whenever they cease to exercise these functions, and become the mere servile instruments of the crown or the aristocracy, their popular qualities are extinct, and they render themselves (under the forms of liberty), the active agents of oppression. Tho' the king is the head of the constitution, by convention and consent, yet the people are the sovereign by nature and by right, for all power is exercised for their good and by their permission. The physical strength resides with the governed, and therefore all authority is derived from them, but for the sake of unity, dispatch, and convenience, they have invested the king with the supreme executive power, and to avoid the confusion, intrigue, and danger of an elective supremacy, they have rendered his power he-

editary ; still reserving to themselves the right of changing the succession whenever the misconduct of their kings requires their interference. A principle most clearly established at the revolution. That the king can do no wrong is one of those maxims by which the nature of the kingly power is defined, and to a certain extent it has its uses, for in ordinary cases it prevents a vexatious and needless enquiry into the conduct of the executive, and throws the king's responsibility upon his ministers, but whenever either of these presume to trench upon the grand principles of the constitution, to violate the laws, or to attempt an alteration of the government, that maxim has been disregarded, and the king has been punished both for his own misdeeds, and those of his ministers, and as kings are but men, a king, who has manifestly transgressed the bounds of his authority, is as much the subject of punishment as a highwayman or an assassin. I am sorry to say that there is at present such a disposition in the higher powers to encroach upon the provisions of the constitution, that perpetual vigilance is requisite on the part of the people to preserve their rights, privileges, and liberties inviolate, and this vigilance must be exercised in popular assemblies le-

gally convened, not for the purpose, as it has been said, of overawing the legislature, but of recalling the different branches of it to a sense of their duty, and their interest.

The veneration of an Englishman for the constitution of his country, is not because it is written in a book, or has been decreed by a solemn assembly, but because he feels that it secures his liberty and his property, and has produced a greater degree of happiness than any other human institution which has been known to exist. I will not say all that has been said of it in theory, because I am well convinced that much of its excellence has been impaired by vicious practice, and that from the increase of luxury, and diminished value of money, justice is neither so cheap nor so easily attainable as it ought to be; but for the redress of these and many other grievances we want only a more equal representation in parliament, and that may be acquired by the increasing spirit and information of the people, without any change in the present mode of election, or any violent commotion. The great excellence of the British constitution is, that it possesses, like nature, a principle of renovation, which, if preserved, will reach to immortality.

*The Case
our
for
Const*

British Constitution

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*Constitution
Law
separated
defined*

The words constitution and law having caused some confusion of ideas and expressions, it is requisite that they should be more accurately understood. Constitution means that form of government under which men live together in any particular country, and from whence is derived the power of making laws.—There are two kinds of law, first, the law which defines the rights and duties of the different branches of the constitution, subsequent to their first formation, which is called constitutional law, and secondly, that which defines the rights and duties of citizens, and is called municipal law.—These laws equally declare the will of the governing power, but part of them relate to itself, and part to the other members of the state, that is the people, for whose benefit alone both the law and the constitution exist. All laws relating to elections, for instance, are constitutional laws, as well as those which relate to the convening, and dissolving parliaments, or to the exercise of the royal prerogative. The Habeas Corpus is a municipal law, as well as those, whether written or unwritten, which concern the liberty or restraint of the press, and the trial by jury, in actions criminal or civil; this will, I trust, sufficiently mark the difference between

the law and the constitution. As the fundamental principle of good government is representation, no man can be said to be a free man who is not either actually or virtually represented, who is not either represented or supposed to be so, for however the practice of representation may be corrupted, yet where the principle is acknowledged, there must always remain some degree of freedom.—That government which affords protection at the cheapest rate is comparatively the best; but when governments become so expensive and extravagant as to take from the people a considerable portion of their property under the name of taxes, they can only be said to defend them against others, that they may rob them with greater security, and the only difference to the people is, that the robbery committed by government is regular and certain, and that of a mob is uncertain and violent. The antiquity of the English constitution is one of its greatest securities, for while the paper constitutions of France and Italy have been blotted out, or torn in pieces by one despot after another, the constitution of England remains written in the hearts of the people, and while one true Englishman exists it can never be forgotten. The first thing which

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every man in this country ought to teach his children is, to understand and to venerate the liberties which are transmitted to him by his ancestors, and of which the chief maxims are, "That no man can be imprisoned, detained, or outlawed, but by the judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land. "That every man's house is his castle." "That there is no wrong without a remedy." "That no man can be deprived of his property but by due course of law." "That no man can be taxed without his own consent, or that of his representatives." "That every man's right to his liberties is older than the title deeds to the oldest estate." "That Englishmen ought to be as free as their own thoughts, and that their liberty consists in doing all things which are not injurious to the liberty of others."

*the defects
in our
constitution*

Should the time ever arrive when the legislature can coolly and fearlessly venture to review those defects of the constitution, which either belong to its original formation, or have crept in thro' time and abuse, there are some things of no very small moment which ought to be attended to, but this time will not come till the great and radical abuse of rotten boroughs is removed. The first and most essential grievance which requires a remedy,

is the arbitrary and undefined nature of parliamentary privilege. It was once very accurately defined, but since power has been added to privilege, it knows no bounds, and may in time be subversive of all those rights and liberties it pretends to preserve. No privilege, which is not positively requisite for the discharge of their functions, ought to be allowed to the members of either house, and it is ridiculous to say that these functions can be interrupted by the most atrocious libel; and as to their dignity being insulted, that will always be best preserved by their own conduct as men and as legislators. As a matter of minor importance, it is to be desired that the power of voting by proxy should be given up by the lords, for it is a satire upon every debate to find that there is on the division a certain number of men who exercise the privilege either of knowing it by inspiration, or of voting without any regard to the argument or eloquence on either side of the question. It is also much to be wished that the lords had a speaker of their own, who should have no other employment, and that the bishops should no longer be withdrawn from their spiritual duties, by attending their temporal concerns as barons. It is desirable that there should be a regular attend-

*1st of a
Parlia
ment*

*2^d The
Voting
Power*

ance of at least fifty peers, for six hours, three times in a week during the session, under a heavy penalty, and the same in the Commons for five days in the week. It is desirable also that more roomy accommodation should be provided for the auditory in both houses, and that all debates should be public, except in secret committees, for nothing gives the constituent so great a hold upon his representative as the publicity of debates. It would also be well ordered that no naval or military officer, on actual service, should be a member of the House of Commons, unless we can suppose that either of these stations confers on the man who holds them the power of ubiquity, or at least of being in two places at once; for the office of a legislator is much too weighty to be filled by any man who is otherwise actively employed. It may be said that the same doctrine should be held with regard to lawyers— but there is a distinction to be attended to between an office and a profession. A lawyer may attend the House of Commons whenever he pleases, but an officer who is receiving a salary for another duty cannot attend when he pleases, and therefore ought to vacate his seat, for his political and military duties are incompatible.

It's history

It is not meant in this short treatise to give a

minute detail of the British constitution, all that is meant is to place in a strong point of view its distinguished excellencies, and to excite men of all ranks to study its provisions and value its benefits. I am happy to say this study is becoming fashionable. I wish it were more the fashion to practice it. The materials for a valuable work on the British constitution lie scattered through such an immense number of volumes, that it is almost a hopeless task to think of wading thro' such a stream of history and dissertation; it has, however, been many times attempted, but no one has yet succeeded in giving a correct and practical treatise on the subject. Acherly's is the best, tho' neither the form of his work, nor his mode of writing, are pleasant. Blackstone, tho' he professes to treat only on the laws, contains much valuable information on the constitution, but he is neither profound, nor correct, and too much inclined to favor the ruling powers. The Essay of De Lolme is a mere rhapsody, a Utopian romance, in which no practical knowledge is to be found. Millar is too diffuse, and deals too much in theory.—Custance has given the best arrangement of the subject, but has not sufficient knowledge, and is besides so violently religious, that he is perpetu-

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King

ally quoting the Bible, when he ought to be quoting Glanville, Bracton, or Fleta. Mr King, a dry antiquarian, attempted the subject, but his treatise is too much limited, for it relates only to one branch of the constitution.

POLITICAL ECONOMY.

HAPPINESS is the end and object of all political institutions; not the happiness of a few individuals, but of the whole community, and those institutions are good or bad, only as they promote this purpose. Even in Athens and Rome, the comforts and convenience of the multitude were not so much considered as those of a few great men, who identified themselves with the state, and made the glory of the whole to depend on their own exploits. In both these far-famed republics, the great body of the people were in a wretched state of degradation and ignorance, their religion was superstition, their morality was pride, and their happiness was in tumult and confusion; they were totally ignorant of the principles of commerce, their lands were cultivated by slaves, and war was their chief employment. Where then are we to look for just notions of happiness among them, for that solid and substan-

*Human
Happin
the ba
of soc
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tial comfort which consists in the full exercise of the social affections, in a moderate enjoyment of corporeal pleasures, in the refined feelings of taste and sensibility, in the limited pursuit of wealth, in the honorable occupations of the mind, in the pleasures of knowledge, in the application of science to practical purposes, and in the superior luxury of doing good to individuals and to society? Such exalted notions of happiness are to be found only among a limited number, even amid the boasted refinement of Greece and Rome, and yet these ideas ought to be generally diffused, before we should talk of the happiness or virtue of a country. If we look among the lower ranks of society in these famous states, we shall find them in a state of mental and social degradation, little better than the savages of Africa, and not equal to the inhabitants of Mexico. To the decent comforts of life (as they were once enjoyed by the peasants of this country), they were totally strangers; even the better sort had few ideas of happiness but in the glory of their country, a glory which consisted in destroying their species; when wearied with their work of blood, they sat down and called it peace, and boasted of their victories, dearly purchased, and never enjoyed. Such were the

people of Greece and Rome ; to their literature, and to a few great men, are these states indebted for the splendid figure they have made in the world, so that, if we form an opinion of the general happiness and information from the attainments of a few individuals, our estimate will be very far from the truth, for in countries where the means of diffusing knowledge were few and difficult, the generality of the people were out of the pale of learning. The theatres in some measure tended to refine the feelings of the people, tho' their plays were in general directed to no great moral purpose, for their tragedies frequently represented actions of no good tendency, and their comedies were coarse satire. The amphitheatres of Rome were no better than bear-gardens, where the people were instructed in murder and blood-shed. Tho' many of their philosophers had formed tolerably just notions of happiness and society, yet they seem more to have instructed future ages than their own, and to have legislated for posterity rather than for the times they lived in ; for, by the invention of printing, their works are now more generally diffused than they were while they lived. To them we are certainly indebted for many ideas on political œconomy of considerable

value, yet not to be compared with the improvements of modern times. Montesquieu, Turgot, and Smith, are worth ten thousand such writers as Plato and Aristotle; for the former of these wrote from his own imagination rather than actual experience, and the other, tho' he argued upon facts, was too subtle and refined to be of much practical utility. Tho' much has been done by many great men towards the melioration of society, much remains to be done, by extending and diffusing those just and liberal ideas, which are yet limited to a few, and to be generally useful must be generally adopted, but chiefly among the upper and wealthy ranks; for statesmen must be enlightened before the people can be happy, and till the liberal principles of Smith and Turgot are understood and acted upon by the rulers of states, the comforts and pleasures which nature has abundantly provided can never be generally diffused. Commerce must be disentangled from many restraints, before men can enjoy the blessings of nature, peacefully and extensively. Statesmen must find out their own happiness, and power depends on those of the people, and that the prosperity of a country is not to be estimated by the luxury of a few, or even many individuals,

but by the comforts, content, and enlightened state of the people in all ranks, and that the true policy of government does not consist in suppressing their remonstrances, but in removing the cause of complaint.

The science of politics, so little understood by our forefathers, is of all others the most useful and comprehensive; it is to the moral world what chemistry is to the natural, for as the one embraces all the objects of nature, so the other comprehends all that regards the happiness of man, as an individual and a member of civilized society. To preserve a just regulation of the world, men must not only know their own duty, but in a general view they must be acquainted with that of others. Every man should learn what he is bound to perform, and what he has a right to expect from his superiors; it is not requisite that we should all be legislators, yet it is neither impossible nor difficult that we should know what is required of a legislator; for, if reason is not exercised in that station in which a man is placed, it is a mere barren possession.

The subjects which political œconomy embraces are various, and almost infinite; for, after the formation of government, which depends on political science, all the rest comes

under the description of political œconomy, but where the former is not founded on just principles, we must not look for the other. Men began to plunder before they began to trade; such is the lamentable picture of society drawn by Thucydides, in the short but comprehensive preface to his history. Till the formation of towns and cities, we must not expect to find any thing like political œconomy. Herodotus, the earliest authentic historian, whose works are now extant, has given a favorable account of the Egyptian institutions, and, it is worthy of remark, that despotic governments, where the princes are wise and virtuous, have been the best administered; but this is no decisive argument in their favor in preference to popular institutions, because for one king that has done good, hundreds have been murderers and tyrants, and popular governments have never yet had a fair trial in any country but America, and America is the freest country in the world. The tyrannies of Asia have at times produced monarchs who have consulted, in some degree, the good and happiness of their people, to the best of their knowledge, but political science among them was in its infancy. To Greece and Rome we must look for more

enlarged and liberal ideas of government and society, yet even them we shall find defective in the great end of political institutions; for neither their religion, their morality, nor their politics, were of a nature to promise much general happiness.

Xenophon is the first writer who treated on subjects of political œconomy, and his treatise, tho' short, is of inestimable value. In an essay on the Athenian republic, he confesses and laments the poverty, wretchedness, and ignorance of the people; and he maintains, that tho' they were not qualified to have any share in the government, yet to that share which they possessed, he says, they were alone indebted for their liberty, as there was a constant desire in their richer superiors to enslave and oppress them. From such a confession, it is easy to infer, that there were in Athens but two ranks of men, the rich and the poor; as a remedy for this inconvenience, he proposes a variety of methods, to encrease the provisions and population of the country. He states, first of all, its natural advantages, and, as the means of increasing these, he advises, in the second chapter, to promote the settling and residence of foreigners, by affording them every inducement for the purpose. In the third chapter,

Xenoph.
the ear
writes
polite
Remo

he proposes granting every indulgence to merchants. In the fourth, he discusses the use and excellence of mines, and tho' in this chapter, his intentions are good, he shews that he was unacquainted with the present principles of commerce, which, so far from permitting government to have any share in its management, leave it entirely to the protection of individuals and the country; but the last chapter is worth all the rest, for in direct opposition to the sentiments of all other statesmen, who think only of destroying their species, and consider war and taxation to be the whole of their employment, he proposes peace as the best means of increasing the population and revenue, by promoting industry and commerce.

Enophris
equestrian
art" &
"economics"

His treatise on the equestrian art, so far as it relates to a manly and healthy exercise, may be considered as a branch of political œconomy; and here (tho' not strictly within the limits of my subject), I will speak of that most excellent of all his works, the *Œconomics*; in which all the relative duties of life are marked out with accuracy and feeling, and every thing which can make a man happy in his own breast, and an honor to society, is drawn in characters, clear, apposite, and forcible; and the foundation for every thing

great and honorable in public life, is laid in private virtue, on a basis of morality which no shock, nor accident, nor temptation, can endanger.

To Xenophon succeeded Plato and Aristotle, who have incidentally treated some subjects of political œconomy. The ancients never combined the words *political œconomy*, for they were strangers to the ideas they conveyed, when united; they understood them separately, and applied the one to a family, and the other to a state, but they never considered a state as a family. This benevolent view of things was reserved for modern times, and for the French nation; it is there we find the words, *political œconomy*, first combined.

Sully was one of those statesmen who governed with a view to the good of the people, more than their own interest, and it is to him that we are to look for the first notions of this great science. Finance is the grand object of all ministers, and tho' it is easy to lay on taxes, it is not easy to make them productive. Sully was the first who thought of doing so, by promoting the industry and comforts of the people. He laid the foundation of the future prosperity of France, and sowed that seed which was afterwards reaped, by the rapacious

The ancients did not distinguish between political & private œconomy.

The French first combined the terms.

Sully is the first genuine financier.

hands of Richlieu and Mazarin. His private virtues were a pledge to the public for the regularity of his public conduct, and the management of the state was only that of his family upon a larger scale. The man who is profligate and improvident in the management of his own affairs, can never be economical in those of the public, tho' a great statesman may be a man of bad private morality. The first object of Sully, after he commenced his administration, was to regulate the finances, which had before been squandered by the profligacy of mistresses and favorites, who had reduced the king and the country to the lowest pitch of distress and poverty. Henry felt the evils which he so long suffered, tho' he was good-natured and ignorant. He listened to the base insinuations of those who wished to keep Sully at a distance; but time and perseverance enabled this great man to expose all their villainies, and open the eyes of the king to his true interest.

*Sully's
ignorance
of Commerce*

Tho' animated by the best intentions for the good of the country and of his master, Sully seems to have been ignorant of the true principles of commerce, which have since been more fully developed. His love of frugality and economy induced him to load it with

many checks and restraints in order to oppose the progress of luxury, but luxury, to a certain extent, is inseparable from riches, as riches are from prosperity, and he who restrains the one inevitably restrains the other. It is only when luxury creates excessive poverty that it can be injurious. Sully's intentions were good, yet his ideas of the wealth and prosperity of a state were narrow and illiberal, because they were formed from a partial and limited view of things; he saw a few individuals who had grown rich at the expence of the public, blazing their splendid luxuries in the eyes of the poor, and insulting the impoverished nobility; his virtuous pride was offended, when comparing the meanness of their origin with the immensity of their wealth. So far he was right; but when he attempted to restrain luxury in general, he was wrong, for he never considered that wealth, properly distributed and honestly obtained, increases the strength and happiness of a kingdom, and makes even luxury to be innocent. More liberal notions of political œconomy would have taught him, that when comforts are generally extended, luxuries can be injurious to none, and it is only when they are enjoyed by a few that they destroy the prosperity of the whole. A few rich

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men make many poor, but when riches are moderate and diffused, the poor must partake of their comforts.

*Sully,
the father
of all sub-
= sequent
Economists*

To appreciate justly the character of this great man, as a political economist, we ought to take into consideration the times in which he lived, and then wonder, not at the defects, but the extent of his knowledge, and his incorruptible integrity. Rapacity, dishonesty, and ignorance, were the prevailing features in the character of every minister before him, he deserves, therefore, the greatest praise for having introduced economy and arrangement into the affairs of finance, and protected every branch of honest industry. That he exposed the vices of his predecessors, and conducted the government on different principles from theirs, is sufficiently to his praise, without expecting from him that intuitive wisdom, which comprehends at a glance the whole of the political machine, and outstrips the collected experience of ages. It is enough to say of any one man, that he sowed the seeds of knowledge, which others have abundantly reaped, and it is enough to say of Sully, that to him we are indebted for all the practical and theoretical economists, who have existed since the times in which he lived.

The immediate successors of Sully were Richlieu and Mazarin, two profligate and ambitious plunderers of the nation, consummate proficient in the arts of intrigue, but destitute of every honest principle, either in public or private. They were the men who first degraded the French character from the elevated pitch which it had attained under the virtuous government of Henry the Fourth, and by the crafty spirit of *finesse* and subtlety, which they introduced into every department of the state, made every Frenchman a courtier. The noble Henry and his generous minister disdained to be won by the base artifices of flattery and intrigue, but these cunning priests favored in others those arts by which they themselves had risen to power. Their different administrations were a continued conspiracy against the liberty and happiness of Europe, and deserve to be blotted from the history of civilized nations. Their system of politics had no other object than the gratification of their own avarice and ambition, and as to a system of political œconomy, they had none, but to get as much money from the people as they could, to support their schemes of intrigue and conquest. Richlieu was too jealous of literary fame to protect men of genius, and if the litera-

*Richlieu
&
Mazarin*

ture of France began to dawn under his administration, it must be attributed to other causes than to his protection or support. Mazarin was the professed enemy of literature, he trusted every thing to art and address; in short, under both these ministers, the national happiness was squandered and despised.

To these tyrants, succeeded the illustrious Colbert, the patron of arts, commerce, and literature, the man to whom France was more indebted than to all the victories of Louis the XIV. He was in many respects the opposite of Sully; therefore their different systems of administration require to be distinctly examined, in order to determine with accuracy, to which of them the world is most indebted. The same spirit of œconomy and arrangement, in the management of the public accounts, is to be found in both, but their ideas respecting the interest of the country were totally opposite. The one favored simplicity and frugality, the other favored luxury and expence; the one was the enemy of the elegant arts, because he considered them as introducing dissipation and effiminacy, the other was the constant patron of science and literature, because he thought they tended to elegance and refinement; the one was a stern and inflexible

*Colbert
the great
patron of
arts &c*

*his system
contrasted
with
Sully's*

moralist; the other was no less rigid in his notions of morality, but considered them as not incompatible with elegant accomplishments; the one was the enemy of foreign commerce, as tending to corrupt the country by the introduction of luxury, the other gave the preference to commerce over the simple operations of agriculture, because it tended to soften the prejudices of ignorance, and enlarge the comforts of society. France, under Sully, was perhaps more virtuous, but under Colbert she was more enlightened, and, if it is impossible to enjoy the refinements of society without some degree of corruption, we must still give the preference to the philosopher, over the illiterate nobleman or peasant. We admire the virtue of Sully, but we must not depreciate the wisdom of Colbert, for if society, as some believe, is in a progressive state, that man deserves the greatest praise, who advances beyond his predecessors in knowledge and refinement. To those who believe that virtue and luxury are incompatible, the merits of Sully will appear more splendid; but they who are of opinion that the greatest improvement of which society is capable, is to unite morality and refinement, and to diffuse wealth, happiness, and comfort, will consider Colbert

as the more useful man, the better minister and the greater friend of mankind, because he has contributed to enlarge the bounds of knowledge, which Sully, with timid prudence and short-sighted wisdom, wished to restrain, as dangerous to the interests of virtue and morality.

*Colbert's
numerical
principles
exposed*

The impolicy of Colbert's regulations with respect to commerce has been ably exposed by a great theoretical economist, and experience has proved the justice and wisdom of his remarks; for the freedom of commerce, like the freedom of the press, should never be restrained till it becomes a public grievance, instead of a public good; when it has exceeded the limits of convenience, it is no longer an object of protection or support.

Montesquieu

Another Frenchman of illustrious reputation has contributed to enlighten and improve mankind on the subject of political economy. Montesquieu, in his Spirit of Laws, in discussing those which relate to political economy, has thrown much light upon a subject, which yet requires many years of experience in all its branches to bring to maturity. His remarks are the result of deep observation, and extensive knowledge of the laws and manners of different nations, but he rather tells us what

has been than what ought to be ; he has too frequently only mentioned facts, and left his readers to deduce the inferences.

Montesquieu, with all his merits, has many faults. He wished to save appearances with the government under which he lived, and therefore dared not to attack openly the unjust institutions of his own, and other countries ; he speaks more favorably of positive than of natural rights ; he considers that the laws and government of all nations ought to be suited to the temper and dispositions of the people ; and, therefore, denominates them good or bad, as they bear to be tried by this test, and not by the principles of reason, which are of general application. This is his grand maxim, and tho' we find some deviations from it in different parts of his book, yet these are rather to be attributed to the force of truth, than to the honesty or judgment of the author. According to this maxim, all governments are good while they adhere to their original principles. He ought rather to have considered them good or bad, as they are formed and administered on principles of reason and justice ; for justice is only the application of reason to the affairs of the world, and reason, when undisguised by custom and prejudice, is the

same in all men. One country is therefore equally as capable of being governed by the principles of justice as another, perhaps not immediately, but ultimately; to deny this, is to deny that reason is every where the same, or that the natives of New Holland are not as capable of being governed by British laws a hundred years hence, as it might have been five hundred years ago, to say, that our laws were not capable of being further improved. The prosperity and morality of a people, depend on the nature of their government, and not the government on them, but on the dispositions of a few individuals; for a proof of this look at, and compare, ancient Greece and Italy with what they are at present.

*The error
of French
Economists*

The economists, a set of philosophers in France, who exalted the merits of agriculture above those of commerce and manufactures, have so far been guilty of a gross error, and Adam Smith has shewn the fallacy of that part of their system which represents the labor of manufacturers, merchants, and artisans, as barren and unproductive, but he has neglected to shew the cause of it. It was the misfortune of these theorists, as of all others, to be bigotted to one particular state of things, and consequently to depreciate whatever opposed

their own ideas. It was their object to exalt the merits of agriculture over those of commerce, as leading to a more simple and innocent life, and they therefore either wilfully or ignorantly substituted a verbal for an essential distinction; for tho' the farmer, by his labor, does actually reproduce, every year, all that contributes to the clothing and food of man, yet the manufacturer, who gives that produce another form, and the merchant who is the means of its distribution, equally contribute to the comfort and convenience of the whole; they are, therefore, equally useful to society. The doctrines of the economists, tho' illiberal and short sighted, have produced many converts among those who either envy the luxuries of others, or conscientiously despise them. Bonaparte, as the professed enemy of commerce, has found many advocates in this country, tho' I doubt the chief motive of these men is their dislike of submitting to the great, and their love of ruling the little. Many a man likes to declaim against luxury merely because it gives him a command over the multitude, when that very same man is in his own practice an admirer of luxury and all its concomitants, a lover of aristocratical distinctions, and a despiser of his inferiors.

*The excellence
of Turgot's
system*

The illustrious Turgot comes next in the rank of political oeconomists, and from his administration we must date a new era in the history of society. Erroneous practices, sanctioned by time, were exploded by his piercing intellect, and principles, founded on the essential relations of men to each other in society, were developed and extended—such were the services of Turgot to mankind. It is requisite to shew what these principles were, which were now first brought to light. The necessity of examining and discussing every opinion which concerns the interest of society, to find out whether it is capable of producing practical utility, which was his grand maxim, from which all the rest naturally resulted.

*The "Utilité"
his grand
maxim.*

*The freedom
of commerce
his 2nd
principle*

The next which he established, was the freedom of commerce from all restraint and interference on the part of government; this also was unknown to the world, because it was formerly conceived that commerce could not thrive without the aid of government. In its infancy, it is true, it might require protection, but there is a certain point at which that interference ceases to be useful, and becomes injurious. The necessity of rendering equal justice to all men, was another of his fundamental maxims, which, applied to the political

*3^d
The necessity
for impartial
justice*

œconomy of a state, induced him to destroy many odious privileges, and relieve the poor from many unjust vexations.

The administration of Turgot was succeeded by a series of events, which caused the objects of political œconomy to be forgotten or disregarded. The ruinous American war, and the prodigality of Maria Antoinette, occasioned such a disturbance in the finances, that succeeding ministers thought only of providing for the necessities of the state, and neglected the comforts of the people. Like many others who are anxious for a particular end, they forgot the means, and in their disputes about the detail of finance, they seemed to disregard every other purpose, till at length the necessity of calling together the States General, put an end to all their schemes, and introduced a revolution, which, like a violent storm, has in some measure purified the political atmosphere.

The subject of political œconomy was never professedly undertaken by any English author before Sir James Steuart, who first published his elaborate discussion in 1767. Sir William Petty, Davenant, Hume, and others, had treated on different parts of this interesting subject, and opened the way for future writers; but

*The effects
of Political
Events
succeeded*

*Steuart,
1767 Eng. 6*

*Petty,
Davenant
Hume*

Steuart professes to have been most indebted to the French economists. This author, tho' he deserves great praise for his intentions, has undertaken a subject too great for his powers, at least he has given his book a title which it does not deserve; for instead of treating political economy in general, he has only entered on a few of its branches, such as agriculture, population, money, and trade, while he has omitted many others of infinite importance. The principles he has laid down, are, no doubt, accurately developed, and Smith has borrowed from him without acknowledging the obligation. The method of Steuart is tedious, his style more so, and the whole of his dry researches on population and luxury might be reduced to these few lines. The population of a country will always be in proportion to the means of subsistence, and luxury will always depend on the mode in which subsistence is divided; for suppose one hundred men can raise and manufacture produce sufficient to support a thousand, if that is engrossed by a hundred, they will enjoy luxuries while the other nine hundred have only a bare subsistence; thus luxuries and poverty will always be in an exact proportion.

The profound reflections on the circulation

*defects
Steuart's
book*

*immature
Steuart's
work*

*his
reflections
on money.*

and value of money, with which part of the first and the whole of the second volume are taken up, hang like a dead weight upon the book, and sink it to perpetual oblivion; for I will venture to say, that where ten people read Smith, not one ever looks at Sir James Steuart. The complicated movements of society are rendered more complicated in his book, instead of being simplified, so as to be easily understood, which ought to have been the writer's endeavor; for no man does so great a service to the world, as he who attempts to simplify what is intricate and perplexed. With all his merits, both of intention and execution, Sir James Steuart is now become a neglected author, while his countryman, Adam Smith, continues to be read and admired, for he is, of all that have yet written on the subject of political œconomy, the most luminous and liberal. He has been taxed with some errors in his principles, and this is by no means improbable, as he certainly wrote more from theory than from actual experience; he has represented things as they ought to be, rather than as they are, yet he has become the text book of most modern politicians, who swear by him right or wrong, just as it suits their purpose. The principles which he has

*his
complex*

*Steuarts
superior
Adam Smith*

Smith's

Political Economy

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laid down are indeed generally conducive to the good and happiness of society, and were they adhered to throughout, there could be no danger in applying them, but he has supposed them to be practised under certain situations, which, if they do not exist, seem to destroy the truth of his positions. In all that he has said relating to the corn trade, he has never imagined it possible that paper credit, and commercial speculation, could have been carried to the extent we have seen in our times; he therefore very liberally supposed it impossible that any set of men could have it in their power to commit such extensive injury to their fellow-creatures, as almost to deprive whole ranks of their subsistence, and certainly of their comforts. Had he now been alive, he must either have given up his own principles, or condemned the conduct of those who applied them, when the state of society was so materially different from all that he could ever have supposed. He perhaps, never thought it possible for a government to exist for any length of time, whose existence depended on a basis of paper, after having mortgaged the whole national property to pay their debts. Had he lived to see this, he would not have been astonished at the tender-

*His
Observations
on the Corn
Trade
theoretical*

*His error
on paper
currency.*

ness with which they treated those men, whose existence they had partly created, and whose speculations were so intimately connected with the safety of the state, as to defy the hand of government to interfere with or molest them; for what such speculators wring from the poor, they lend to the government, or pay them in taxes.

The situation of things which has been here *Smith's* displayed, tho' it does not lessen the value *abstract* of the principles of Adam Smith, certainly *principles* lessens the necessity for their constant appli- *sanction* cation, and tho' when better times arrive, they *prejudice* may without danger be enforced, yet there is *in fact* no doubt that they at present sanction iniquity, injustice, and fraud. A striking proof of this is to be found in the combinations of bakers, millers, and brewers, to keep up the price of their commodities.

The different branches of political economy *The advance* which have been treated of by different au- *of collect* thors, it is almost impossible to enumerate, *the vari* and as they at present lie dispersed, they fail *systems* to produce that general and extensive good, *a dictu* of which they are capable, and which they *of Pol: c* probably intended to produce. Were they collected together into one comprehensive and regular work, to which any person who wished

for information might refer, their utility would most probably be doubled, and the public reap all the benefit which their authors originally intended. A work of this sort, however tedious and difficult, would become easy and light, by the united endeavours of eight or ten individuals, who with zeal and ability for the undertaking, might abridge the labored researches of various authors, and reduce them into one volume, and call it a *Dictionary of Political Economy*.

Antonia
such a
work
can
A national work of this sort (for such I do not hesitate to call it), might expect to be aided by the purse and authority of government. The utility of such an undertaking, I should trust, could not be doubted, when it is remembered how many interesting subjects of political economy yet remain untouched, and how many are incompletely understood. When there is room then for so many improvements, which ought to originate from government, but at least to be protected by them, it is surely of importance that these subjects should be accurately discussed by men of the first-rate talents, and their suggestions adopted by the legislature; open, however, according to the increasing wisdom of the times, to continual improvements. It

has been the misfortune of Great Britain that she has never had a king, nor even a minister, who paid any regard to political oeconomy. The whole administration of Pitt was employed in opposing the progress of political improvement.

The subject of population being the most important in the whole department of political oeconomy, deserves somewhat more of our attention than the rest; and since the light which has been thrown upon it by Townsend and Malthus, it would be shameful to defend any of the old errors which they have so happily exploded, and not to extend our enquiries, when the road to new information is so fully opened. Allowing Mr Malthus's first position to be true, viz. that population increases in geometrical, and the means of subsistence only in arithmetical progression, and that vice and misery are perpetually at work to reduce the numbers of mankind, and keep the balance even, the most important consequences may be deduced from these premises, which will enlighten many subjects, not only of political, but of moral oeconomy.—The first consequence to be derived from this datum, is the impossibility of ever realizing a complete state of earthly happiness, and thus dissipating the

*on Populati
on & on M
Malthus
System*

philosophic dream of liberty and equality. While a redundant population is ever pressing upon the means of subsistence, misery and inequality, to a certain degree, must exist in society, and it will be impossible ever to adjust the balance so nicely, or to divide property so equally, as to have just as much meat as there are mouths to be filled. By whatever means then, the equilibrium is tolerably preserved, some degree of unhappiness must be produced; for whether the old correctives of vice and misery remain, or the new one of moral restraint takes place, unhappiness must in some measure be the consequence; for every man who feels a strong propensity to matrimony, and restrains himself from moral and prudential considerations, must be so far unhappy, tho' he may avoid greater unhappiness by so doing. Whoever, therefore, suggests visionary schemes of happiness, for the full enjoyment of all our natural powers and faculties, is ignorant of the constitution and moral government of the world, and exposes himself and others to certain misery. The principle of population, if unrestrained, has a perpetual tendency to vice and misery, and even when restrained by the utmost efforts of moral wisdom and forbearance, cannot fail to

create some degree of unhappiness. To mitigate the evils naturally flowing from this powerful principle, Mr. Malthus has suggested the operation of that moral restraint, which shall prevent men from marrying without the certain prospect of procuring the means of subsistence for themselves and their families, but he has laid too much to the charge of population, and too little to the charge of government; for there can be no doubt that the present unjust and unequal division of property has a powerful tendency to limit population, by the waste which men of large fortunes cause in the means of subsistence. To extend population, property must be somewhat more equally divided than it is at present, for every man of ten thousand a year, wastes annually the subsistence of at least ten people, and so on in proportion; so that such property is a considerable deduction from the strength and happiness of every country. It is neither practicable nor desirable that population should be so increased as to reduce man to a mere subsistence, but it is desirable to extend it so far as is consistent with the greatest possible enjoyment to the greatest number of people; for in this light, and in this only, an

extensive population is to any nation an increase of happiness and strength.

*the
Poor*

The new light thrown upon this important topic, naturally leads to the consideration of providing for the poor. The great disproportion between population and the means of subsistence, is the principal cause of all the miseries which exist in the world, and it excites very curious speculations on the intentions of that Being, by whom it was so contrived, if such a system can be the result of contrivance and design. The casual inequality of property having left those ranks of society who toil the

most -

most, the worst provided for, and having created not only those who are comparatively, but those who are positively poor, it belongs to the wisdom and virtue of enlightened men to endeavor to restore in some degree the balance which is at present so very disproportionate, and render the lighter side at least able to support itself against the pressure at the opposite extreme.

*false
injurious
stem of
British
w-laws.*

The state of the poor in this country, and every thing that relates to them, call loudly for revision and reform: the nation is oppressed, and they are not relieved by the laws now in force to provide for them. The immense mass of statutes, formed from parti-

cular exigencies and limited experience (tho' many are obsolete, because the circumstances which occasioned them have now ceased to operate), should be gradually removed, and the poor left to support themselves, by the proper application of their industry, and by an increased knowledge of their true interest, and when they have only these resources to trust to, they will be better supported than by parish bounty or forced subsistence, the country and the poor will both be relieved, and the trouble of those who administer these ridiculous laws may be wholly spared. One fact is worth fifty arguments—Scotland and Ireland have no poor laws, and yet the poor in these countries are not more numerous, nor more wretched than in England. The sums which are annually raised for the support of the poor, every one must allow are enormous; it is natural then to ask, why are they so miserable? the answer is obvious, because this is not the proper method of providing for their wants; give them useful knowledge, or knowledge suitable to their station, rather than money, and they will then act according to their own interest. The expence, the intricacy, the impolicy, the injustice, and the cruelty of the poor laws, form the strongest ground of objec-

*Scotland
Ireland
no poor*

tion against them, and prove to a demonstration that they ought to be gradually repealed. The first head is enormous; it has swelled to such a size, that it will soon become too big for the body, and increase the numbers of the poor, for it falls so unequally and partially, that every man does not contribute according to his property, but according to the district in which he happens to live, for in some opulent and fashionable parts of great towns the rich pay nothing, and in others the middle ranks are reduced to poverty by taxation. The intricacy of these laws can never be doubted, when it is remembered how much it costs to explain them, and to settle the disputes which their ambiguity gives rise to. The impolicy of the poor laws is sufficiently evident, from the temptations they hold out to idleness, debauchery, and improvident marriages, by inducing those who have no probable means of providing for their children, either natural or legitimate, to trust them to be maintained by the parish. Their injustice arises from the circumstance of their compulsory nature, in making any man provide for the maintenance of another. See how injustice has a tendency to beget injustice, you deprive one man of his rights, and he is dis-

*expenditure
the poor
regulating*

4 +)

*their
intricacy*

*their
impolicy*

*their
injustice*

abled from gaining a livelihood, to remedy this you compel another to provide for him, and so both of them are oppressed, for all injustice is oppression.—The cruelty of the poor laws consists not only in their radical injustice, for all injustice is cruelty; but in their administration. *their cruelty*

10/10/1 Were the poor educated in principles of oeconomy, sobriety, and prudence, there could be no danger of their making an improper use of the surplus of their wages, for such principles will teach them how it is to be applied; and where casual instances of distress and poverty arise, they may safely be left to the relief of private beneficence. It is to be hoped that the exertions of Joseph Lancaster, first excited by Dr Bell, and those of the clergy, excited by Lancaster, will so improve the condition of the poor, as to allow the poor laws to be gradually removed. *strictly according to prudence shd. for their education*

The folly of raising funds for the poor to be managed by others, in such places as poor-houses, is sufficiently evident in theory, if it had not been too fully evinced by experience; but the cruelty of such institutions is equal to their folly, for where can any man be so comfortable, so independent, so easy, so free, and so happy, as in his own house? the meanest *in practice theory, & improved the state of poor h*

cottage which a man can call his own, is preferable to the most splendid palace, where, instead of the consolation and attendance of their friends, the poor and aged are surrounded by sights of misery, and attended only by cruel and mercenary wretches, who are so familiar with sickness and poverty, as to have lost all feeling and compassion for distress. The tyranny and cruelty of overseers is often greater than that of the hired superintendants of a poor-house, and I doubt much cannot be said for their honesty; their ignorance is in general equal to all the rest of their faults, for they have frequently been known to refuse relief where they have been compelled to give it at last, and in many cases to have suffered the objects of their cruelty to die under the pain and fatigue of a removal, rather than risk a penny to save their lives. No man who has attended to the execution of the poor laws, and possesses any feelings either of humanity or justice will attempt to deny that they are inevitably the occasion of infinite iniquity, cruelty, and tyranny, and that even the most that can be done by wise and humane men, cannot remedy their radical defects; it is to be hoped, that in process of time, they will be entirely removed.

The only possible and practicable remedy for the evils attending a numerous population is the instruction of the poor in the principles of œconomy and moderation, virtues which require a severe discipline of the mind, but are the only means of avoiding the greater miseries arising from vice and dissipation.

*The only
practicable
remedy*

NOTES

TO

MATERIALS FOR THINKING.

LIBERALITY OF SENTIMENT.

note - / **THE** quotations contained in the following notes, are not cited from any vain parade of learning, but merely to prove facts, and confirm opinions, by the authority of those whom the world has hitherto considered as its teachers, and were not thought of till after the text was composed.

1 P. 1. "*It embellishes.*" Liberality of sentiment, is to our other virtues as a fine frame to a good picture. The best man in the world may be unamiable for want of it.

2 P. 1. "*The first teacher.*" Judge not, that ye be not judged," *Matt.* vii. v. 1. is an excellent lesson of liberality; and the 14th of the *Romans* is full of the same precepts.

3 P. 2. "*The liberality.*" "The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another. He takes his seat in the temple of science, and asks not who sits beside him."

Letter to the Abbe Raynal.

P. 2. "*The test of sincerity.*" Unhappily for this country, there was a time when the very name of liberality was odious to a certain party, who summoned all the worst passions of human nature to their defence, and, in the fervor of pretended alarm, called upon us to give up all the feelings of generosity, moderation, and forbearance, to further their traiterous designs upon the constitution. As a proof of that spirit of extermination which I have mentioned, I will quote a passage from a violent publication, called the *Anti Jacobin*.—"Let us hear no more of amiability and gentleness; of candor, liberality, and moderation; of conciliating, mild, and generous feelings. Such qualifications are now not virtues, but vices. They are, in short, but other names for pusillanimity and treachery."—The spirit of philosophy is directly the opposite of this; for Aristippus being asked what advantage he derived from it, answered, "*To be able to converse freely with all men.*"

by note

Diog. Laert. p. 120, vol. i. ed. Meib.

P. 4. "*Automata.*"
 "J' approuve cependant que chacun ait ses dieux,
 Qu' il les serve a son mode et sans peur de la peine."

5 "

Polyeucte de Corneille, Act 5.

"Of all the tyrannies on human kind,
 The worst is that which persecutes the mind;
 Let us but weigh at what offence we strike,
 'Tis but because we cannot think alike."

Dryden's Hind and Panther.

6 "

P. 6. "*Forbearance from injury.*" The same sentiment is to be found in Alfieri's tragedy of Polonice.

"E ver non l' amo

Che amar chi t' odia ell' e impossibil cosa,
Ma nuocergli non vo'."

ndc

Act. 2d. sc. 4.

7

P. 7. "*To insult.*" No species of illiberality is more common than to attribute difference of opinion, and eccentricity of conduct to a perversion of intellect:

8

P. 7. "*A godlike virtue.*"

"Illius vero Romanæ liberalitatis cælestem spiritum, nullæ literæ, satis dignis laudibus, prosequenter."

Val. Max. lib. 4, c. 8, l. 5.

9

P. 7. "*Without offence.*" "If he that pursues his pleasures or interests as much, or more than I do, and allows me to have as good sense as he has in all other matters, tells me that I should be of his opinion, but that passion or interest blinds me; unless he can convince me how or where this lies, he is but where he was, and only pretends to know me better than I do myself, who cannot imagine why I should not have as much care of my soul as he has of his."

Sir W. Temple on the United Provinces, c. 5.

To those of my readers who deny the the right of private judgment in the concerns of religion, I recommend to read the whole of this admirable chapter.

10

P. 7. "*Liberality of sentiment.*" It was said of Menedemus, that he greatly admired Stilpo; being asked his opinion of him, he said nothing more than, "He is a liberal man."

Diog. Laert. 175.

11

P. 13. "*Adultery ceases.*" The law I. James 1st. c. 11.

which exempts from punishment all those who marry again after either party has been seven years out of the British dominions, ought to have gone further and allowed them to marry as if they had been divorced, for surely there can be no crime where the law affixes no punishment, but the old church doctrine says that marriage cannot be dissolved. Milton in his Tract on the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, is clearly of opinion, "That the party deserted is no longer bound, but may lawfully seek another consort, if need be, towards a pure and blameless conversation."

Vol. i. p. 405. Fol. Edition.

P. 14. "*Depreciate.*" "*Necesse est enim, sibi nimum tribuat, qui se nemini comparat.*"

Quinct. de publicis scholis, ed Rollin.

The violence and illiberality with which even literary disputes were formerly conducted, may seem incredible to the present age ; yet such was the overbearing insolence of some great literary characters towards their inferiors, that our language seemed too poor to afford them terms of sufficient contempt.—In the great controversy between Boyle and Bentley, about the stupid epistles of a detestable tyrant, we find perpetually the words "pride, insolence, ill-manners," &c. nay, in one place, Dr. Bentley tells us, that, "the gentleman has given a broad hint, that if I proceed further against Phalaris, I may draw upon myself a duel or a stab." The Doctor, however, was not inferior to him in hard words, for he calls his work "a calumny, detraction, injustice, forgery, slander, and vile aspersion ;" and defends it too with these words of Terence :

1164

" Si mihi pergit quæ vult dicere, ea quæ non vult audiet.

Andria. l. 927.

By a lamentable perversion of human labor and ingenuity, these Epistles have been re-published with learned notes by Lennep, the most acute of modern critics, and the whole controversy translated into Latin in a separate volume, quarto.

13.

P. 14. "*Arrogant.*" The illiberality of Johnson was a disgrace to the age in which he lived, for it was not wholly his own, but derived its tincture, in some measure, from the persons around him. It was the effect of his education and the temper of the times; yet it was strengthened by the gloominess of his own disposition, and his propensity to tyrannize over others. He was in all respects, however, to whatever cause it was owing, the most illiberal man in his sentiments that any age can produce, considering his great literary attainments. His politics, his religion, his criticism, his conversation, and his conduct, were all illiberal. Tho' I by no means deny the great merits of Johnson as a moral instructor, I am not blind to his faults. Particular passages are too numerous to be cited, but I refer to his political pamphlets; to his Journey to the Hebrides, to his Lives of Milton, Gray, and Savage. In the latter, his vulgar ill-nature against players, corresponds with the rest of his sentiments on all subjects where he chose to express his dislike, and they are, in every respect, disgraceful to his temper and his morality. Boswell mentioned once having heard an eminent physician, who was himself a christian, argue in favor of universal toleration, and maintain, that no man

could be hurt by another's differing from him in opinion, to which Johnson replied (with the zeal of a bigot), "Sir, you are to a certain degree hurt, by knowing that even one man does not believe," (which means, as you believe), p. 285.—He told Mr Hoole that he wished to have a city club, and asked him to collect one; "but," said he, "don't let them be patriots," vol. ii. p. 380.—The instances I might select are innumerable, but perhaps these are sufficient.

P. 15. "*Illiberality.*" No man, in modern times, ever carried this tyranny to a greater length than the late Mr Pitt, for wherever he had the power to enforce obedience, he suffered no man to question or to oppose his opinions.

P. 19. "*A party man.*" The life of Erasmus was a continued struggle with priests and bigots, and his writings are the very essence of liberality, for though he lived and died in the catholic faith, he was a most candid interpreter of scripture, and of other men's sentiments, and considering the times in which he lived, he was so moderate in his opinions, as with some men to pass for an atheist. "Illud nobis videndum ne sic oderimus Lutherum ut illius odio perdamus ea quæ sunt optima." *Erasmi Epistola*, p. 776.—"Quæ vere docuit monuitque Lutherus sequamur, non quia ille monuit, sed quia recta sunt," p. 1192.

P. 21. "*Moderns.*" Boileau.

P. 23. "*Well intended.*"

"Modesti hominis est a quocunque libenter admoneri."

Erasmi Epistola, p. 1192.

- 10 P. 23. "Forbear to think." The converse of this rule, I doubt, is best suited to the world. I wish to make the world better, but I am not blind to what it is, and has been:
- 17 P. 24. "Kindnesses." "Fortasse pudoris est dissimulare per quos profeceris, sed tamen ingrati pudoris et illiberalis."
Erasmi Epistola, p. 113. ed. fol.
- 20 P. 24. "Illiberal." "Qui invidet minor est."
Plin. Ep. lib. 6. 17.
- 21 P. 25. "Noble minds." "La vraie noblesse aime a se montrer partout et tout entiere; il n'y a que les ames basses ou fausses qui croient avoir besoin de se cacher."
Souvenirs de Thiebault. vol. 2. p. 319.
- 22 P. 26. "Religious bigotry." "Measuring all reason by our own, is the commonest and the greatest weakness; it is an encroachment on the common rights of mankind."
Temple's Works, vol. iii. p. 525, ed. oct.
- 23 P. 27. "Volumes of divinity." "Let it be early inculcated into both sexes, that men are not accountable for their opinions more than for their faces."
Kaimes's Hints on Education, p. 282.
ἰγὼ νομίζω τὸν μὲν εὖ παθόντα δεῖν μιμηθῆναι τὸν πάντα χρόνον τὸν δ' εὖ ποιήσαντα εὐθὺς ἐπιλαλῆσθαι αὐτῶν εἰ δὲ τὸν μὲν χρηστὴν τὸν δὲ μὴ μικροψύχου ποιεῖν ἰσχυροὺς ἀνδράποιοι.
Demost. pro Corona. p. 316. Ed. Reiskii.
- 24 P. 28. "Shipley." The works of this amiable prelate, whose life was a pattern of liberality in conduct and sentiment, deserve to be studied with attention from

beginning to end, but more particularly his celebrated speech in favor of protestant Dissenters, which breathes in every line the pure spirit of Christianity.—The following may serve as specimens :—" And yet, my lords, the most sacred truth I believe myself, I do not think I have any right to impose upon other men." *Shipley's Works*, vol. ii. p. 235.—" The question is not, whether they judge wrong? but whether, they are not to be tolerated, altho' they judge wrong?" *Ditto*, p. 237. " I am not afraid of those tender and scrupulous consciences who are over cautious of professing and believing too much; if they are sincerely in the wrong, I forgive their errors, and respect their integrity; the men I am afraid of, are, the men who believe every thing, subscribe to every thing, and vote for every thing." *Ditto*, p. 253.

P. 28. "*Lardner*." The Letters of Dr Furneaux to Blackstone, contain many excellent arguments for toleration, and induced the judge to retract some of his high church notions, in his second edition:

P. 28. "*Lardner*." Tho' the writings of these dissenting divines are, on the whole, liberal and candid, they are not entirely free from prejudice and bigotry,

P. 28. "*All religion consists in morality*." That species of liberality which allows every man to think for himself, is now making great progress in the world, and it has met with many patrons among men of sense and learning; it has even found its way into Germany, where it is taught by such men as Wieland and Eichorn. The former has written an Essay on Liberty of Thinking in Matters of Belief, which is translated in that valuable

Notes

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26

27

work, *The Varieties of Literature*; it contains, among many others, the following liberal sentiments: "We regard it as a duty of a superior class, to be complaisant to each other in a thousand nugatory matters, and in affairs that concern our conviction, our conscience, our peace of mind, and our integrity, we arrogate to ourselves a right to tyrannize over others."—"It is folly to resolve to explain inexplicable matters, and to demonstrate things incapable of demonstration; but it is both folly and arrogance, in such cases, to force one's own explication or demonstration on others, as truth."—"Happy is the country where illumination and liberty of belief go hand in hand, and where those who are placed as governors over the rest, are convinced that religion is an affair of the heart and not of the head, and that not an agreement in religious opinions, but active love towards mankind, must be the true point of union among Christians."—"How much soever these truths may lose by my manner of delivering them, they are too luminous not to enlighten every one who has eyes to see."—"It is a disgrace to human nature, that it should be requisite to be perpetually contesting for principles which are the palladium of humanity."

NOTES

To the Essay on Human Inconsistencies.

P. 29. "*The great.*" The brevity of ancient wisdom deserves to be contrasted with the prolixity of modern times. Their best authors are strong and pithy, and some of their sages have immortalized themselves by a single sentence. The two words quoted by Juvenal, from the aphorism by which Chilo is known to posterity. It was adopted from him, and inscribed in golden letters in the vestibule of the temple at Delphi, nor will it ever be forgotten while the world exists.—Johnson calls it an epitome of wisdom.

28

"Après s'être convaincu de ces vérités, on sent que le premier point de la morale, celui qui seroit le plus essentiel à la société, celui qui rameneroit le calme parmi les hommes et qui leur prouveroit que le siècle d'or, peut encore renâître, seroit de se connoître soi même; que chacun ne prétendit pas avoir toute la raison de son côté, afin que la recherche de la vérité ne fut pas ce qui amène presque toujours la discorde sur la terre. L' instruction, l' étude de la nature, peuvent seules nous faire atteindre à ce degré éminent."

Gretry Sur la Musique, vol. ii. p. 103.

"Les mêmes défauts qui dans les autres sont lourds & insupportables, sont chez nous comme dans leur centre, ils ne pesent plus, on ne les sent plus. Qui parle d' un autre

note

et en fait un portrait affreux qui, ne voit pas qu' il se peint lui meme."

Caracteres de La Bruyere, de Jugemens, vol. ii. p. 107.

29

P. 29. "*It is a great art.*" Socrates says, in Plato's *Georgias*, "I am one of those who have as much pleasure in being convinced as in convincing; for I think it the greatest good a man can obtain to be freed from error.

30

P. 30. "*Vanity.*" There is no character in history so strongly marked by the inconsistency which arises from vanity, as that of Cicero. He was alternately the flatterer of Pompey and Cæsar, of Antony and Octavius, and even courted the very men he professed to despise, but his splendid talents have in some measure blinded us to his faults. Demosthenes was little less inconsistent, but his inconsistency seems to have arisen from timidity and want of principle.

31.

P. 31. "*The inconsistencies.*" The characters of modern times whom despotism rendered the most inconsistent, were Frederic the Great, and Catharine II. They were philosophers in their sentiments, and tyrants in their actions. Their ambition impelled them to sacrifice the lives of their fellow-creatures by unprovoked aggressions on the territory of their weaker rivals, while they were extending at home the boundaries of taste, science, and morality. The former in private life, was an example of moderation and simplicity, but the latter, by her insatiable lust, was a perpetual contrast to all that she wished others to become, under her instruction and government. She was a Messalina in her pleasures, and a Zenobia in her love of arts and literature. Frederic was a philosopher and a moralist, but he was a warrior,

and in the heat of conquest and revenge, he forgot all the duties he had enjoined to others in the calmer moments of reflection and study. In his *Dialogue de Morale*, which is an excellent epitome of our duties as men and as citizens, he says, "Cela n'est pas difficile. Je n'aurai qu'à parcourir tout ce qui me fait de la peine, et tout ce qui m'est agreable. Je serois fâché qu'on m'enlevât mes possessions, donc je ne dois depousseder personne."—*Oeuvres Posthumes*, vol. xiii. p. 428. Si je les reprime, c'est pour mon propre avantage, pour maintenir les loix qui protegent les faibles contre les attentats du fort, pour soutenir ma reputation et pour ne point encourir les punitions que les loix infligent aux transgresseurs," p. 428. The contrast to this is to be found in *Wraxall's Memoirs*.—"Frederic's generals, more from necessity than inclination, were reduced to burn the suburbs in Dresden in 1758; but he directed his bombs against the finest public edifices during the siege of 1760.—Animated by personal resentment against Count Bruhl, first minister of Augustus, to whose councils he attributed the part taken by his master, the king descended to manifest his indignation against this nobleman in a manner unworthy of a great prince. He not only destroyed Count Bruhl's palaces, but even caused the pavilions and statues in his gardens to be defaced; a state in which many of them remain to this hour." To shew that the classical remark of "Ingenuas, didicisse fideliter artes," &c. is not always true, Mr Wraxall goes on to tell us, "that, during the winter of 1756, when Frederic occupied Dresden, he spent much of his time in the gallery of paintings constructed by Augustus the Third," vol. i. p. 273.—Dr Burney, in

his musical Tour, agrees with both these accounts. Yet, notwithstanding these painful exceptions, which serve to prove the weakness of our reason against the force of the passions, and to shew that men do not always act in conformity to their sentiments, religion can boast of her Ginpins, Latimers, Bulls, Taylors, and Hookers; and philosophy can name more than Hume, Helvetius, and D'Alembert, whose lives corresponded with the purity of their principles.

32

P. 32. "*Future punishment.*" To be more fully convinced of this shocking inconsistency, I refer my reader to the liberal, candid, and weighty "*Reasons for Scepticism,*" by the amiable John Hollis, a man whose life is the best commentary on his opinions, and who practices as well as inculcates benevolence. Such men reconcile one to the species.

33

P. 33. "*Sword.*" Of all those who, with unholy pains, have attempted to reconcile the practice of war with the precepts of Christianity, no one has laboured more heartily, and more unsuccessfully than Dr Parr, in his Fast Sermon preached at Hatton, in Warwickshire.

34

P. 36. "*To amass wealth.*" The riches and temporal possessions of the clergy, since they were established, have given occasion to a modern historian to remark, "*Chi dice Religione, dice Richezze.*" "Whoever speaks of religion, speaks of riches."

Giannone Istoria di Napoli, vol. 2. p. 563 ed. 4to.

35

P. 45. "*A fine lady.*"

"Now deep in Taylor and the Book of Martyrs,
Now drinking citron with his Grace and Chartres;

Now conscience cools her, and now passion burns,
 And atheism and religion take their turns :
 A very heathen in the carnal part,
 Yet still a sad, good christian at the heart."

Pope's Essays, 2.

Boileau has marked the same inconsistencies in the characters of women ; and I might multiply quotations, by applying to Juvenal and Young.

" Ainsi pleine d'erreurs, qu' elle croit legitimes,
 Sa tranquille vertu conserve tous ses crimes,
 Dans un cœur tous les jours nourri du sacrement,
 Maintient la vanite, l' orgueil l' entêtement
 Et croit devant Dieu ses frequens sacrileges
 Sont pour entrer au ciel d' assurez privileges."

Satires, x. v. 614.

P. 47. "*Wholly to.*" The conduct of the world will ever be found inconsistent with those precepts which command us to "love our enemies, to do good to them that hate us, and when we are beaten on one cheek, to offer the other ;" for they are wholly incompatible with our nature ; they may be followed by a few individuals, but they never can be generally observed. Socrates judged more wisely on this subject than Jesus Christ.—V. Plato's *Georgias*.—The inconsistency between the conduct and profession of christians has been admirably illustrated in *Law's Serious Call*—a book which displays a lively imagination, a sound judgment, and great knowledge of the world, and is only to be censured for its overstrained piety and impracticable devotion:

P. 48. "*The mysteries.*" That Bacon, Newton, and Locke, have written in defence of christianity, is no

36

37

proof that christianity is true, it only proves that the strongest minds cannot always overcome the force of early impressions.

36 P. 53. "*Integrity.*" Dr Dodd was a remarkable instance to the contrary, nor will it be difficult to produce many clergymen whose conduct and whose sermons are completely at variance. It is not to be wondered, that when religion is considered as a secular concern, its teachers should not always be circumspect in their lives. A man who is educated to be a lawyer, finds that his success in his profession depends on his knowledge, and his application of that knowledge to those who employ him; but a clergyman soon finds out that *his* success is independent of either, and that, if he is but tolerably correct in his conduct, his preferment will depend less on his merits, than his interest.

37 P. 54. "*The love of fame.*" See Young's Satires throughout, and Pope's Ruling Passion.

40 P. 55. "*Interest.*" The learned Chillingworth was a protestant, a catholic, and a protestant again, and the reward of his last conversion was a living and a prebend; yet his famous book, "*The Religion of Protestants,*" was considered as an apology for his conduct; but this is not the only case where argument has been used as a cloak for interest.

Reynolds, in the time of Charles the 2d, from a dissenter became a churchman, and was immediately presented with a bishopric. Such conversion must be disinterested in the extreme!

NOTES

To the Essay on the Imagination.

P. 61. "*We derive the greatest pleasure.*" Les plaisirs de l' imagination sont les seuls réels. Les bornes trop limitées de la réalité ne nous laissent point le temps d'en jouir, celles de l' imagination prennent les mesures de nos desirs et ne s' arrêtent qu' avec eux.

Gretry sur la Musique, vol. iii: p. 108.

P. 67. "*The researches.*" Tho' I cannot help allowing that they are sometimes trifling, I respect the voluminous labours of Mr Nichols, as affording a copious and rational source of amusement, but there is no book of antiquities which I have perused with so much delight as Milner's history of Winchester. The world is deeply indebted to Mr Britton, to Mr Carter, Mr Hawkins, and many others, for the pains they have taken to illustrate and preserve many valuable remains of antiquity.

P. 69. "*The imagination.*" Dreams are the distorted, but brightened reflections of past events or ideas.—The same sentiments I have lately found in Herodotus.—
πεπλανησθαι αὐται μαγιστὰ ἴσθασι, αἱ οὐκ εἰς τὴν οὐρανὸν, τὰ τις, ἡμῶν φροσινίζει

Herod. 7. 16. The Latin translation is faulty.

P. 69. "*To imagination.*" L' imagination est mere des arts : ils sont rampans dans la speculation : mais tels que l' air subtil qui se degage de la terre, ils s' elancent

jusqu' aux cieux, lorsque avec sagesse on brise leurs entraves.

Gretry, p. 103.

45 P. 70. "*The creations.*" Whoever does not affect and move the same present passions in you that he represents in others, and at other times raise images about you as a conjuror is said to do spirits, transports you to the places and to the persons he describes, cannot be judged to be a poet, tho' his measures are never so just, or his sounds never so sweet.

Temple's Works, vol. iii. p. 406.

46 P. 71. "*The power.*" "I know very well that many, who pretend to be wise by the form of being grave, are apt to despise both poetry and music as toys and trifles too light for the use or entertainment of serious men.— But, whoever find themselves wholly insensible to these charms, would, I think, do well to keep their own counsel, for fear of reproaching their own temper, and bringing the goodness of their natures, if not of their understandings, into question: it may be thought at least an ill sign, if not an ill constitution, since some of our fathers went so far, as to esteem the love of music a sign of predestination, a thing divine, and reserved for the felicities of heaven itself. While this world lasts, I doubt not but the pleasure and request of these two entertainments will do so too; and happy they that content themselves with these, or any other so easy and so innocent, and do not trouble the world, or other men, because they cannot be quiet themselves, tho' nobody hurts them.

"When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child, that must be played

with and humored a little to keep it quiet, till it falls asleep, and then the care is over."

Ditto, p. 429.

7 P. 76. "*Books of instruction.*" The principal end of poetry, and all books of imagination, is to instruct by giving pleasure. Homer is the first in the list, and Telemachus is not the last, yet Homer more artfully conceals his end than Fenelon. In the Iliad, the moral is in the story. Telamachus is a manual of morality, to which the story is subservient.

8 P. 79. "*Enlightened or improved.*" "Il n'est permis cependant qu'aux genies rares de nous faire aimer le beau ideal.—Etant persuades que ces beautés n'existent pas, nous desirons qu'elles existent. Nous soupirons en songeant que c'est de l'accord entre la verité et le mensonge que resulte le beau ideal."

Graty, v. iii. p. 109.

NOTES

To the Essay on Characters.

49 P. 84. "*Yet in men more advanced in life.*" Disappointment often gives a misanthropic turn to the character of those who were before the most cheerful and good tempered; even misanthropy has different shades, according to the difference of those on whom it operates. Shakespeare and Kotzebue have represented Timon, Jacques, and the Stranger, in very different lights. The one is savage, the other humorous, and the third tender. A sudden change of fortune has frequently caused the same in the character, and even the gradual acquisition of wealth will sometimes make a spendthrift avaricious.

50 P. 88. "*The insufficiency.*" The use and the pleasure of reading well-written lives is almost inconceivable, and yet how little of either is to be found in those now extant; it is hardly possible to select above one or two which convey a just idea of the persons represented; this may be proved by referring to the contradictory accounts which are given of those long since dead, and the inadequate ones of those now alive, or lately departed.— Among the many lives which have lately been published, that of Sir W. Jones, by Lord Teignmouth, is the most unsatisfactory; it is so barren of incident, so devoid of interest, and so poor in sentiment, the style is so dull, and the matter so heavy, that it ill repays the time employed

in reading it. From the great literary reputation of Sir W. Jones, and his connection with literary men, it might have been expected that the history of his life would have been enlivened with many interesting anecdotes, and stored with much useful information; no such thing—except a few letters written by himself, and a few more by one or two eminent characters, there is nothing in the book which excites the smallest interest; the narrative is dry and barren; it neither throws any light upon his private life, nor public conduct; in short, it tells us nothing but what was before known by every one who had heard the name of Sir W. Jones; and the best of the letters might as well have been published alone. Let me here be permitted to add, that I have never held the character of Sir W. Jones in that very high estimation in which it is generally considered; he was certainly a man of uncommon attainments, and endowed by nature with a wonderful capacity for acquiring and retaining knowledge, but he was by no means a man of original genius, nor have his writings tended much to enlighten the world; he was not a man who ventured to think for himself, on any subject whatever; he followed the beaten track of knowledge, and possessed himself of much which others knew before him; his passion for oriental literature was singular, tho' not calculated to gain him many admirers with the multitude, for few can appreciate what only few understand; if he was considered as the greatest oriental scholar in England, it was because there were few others; but the road, tho' seldom trodden, was not a new road, nor wholly unknown to English and foreign literati. Sir W. Jones was a man of various and opposite acquire-

ments, and he had some little vanity in wishing to be thought what few literary men are ambitious of—a man of pleasure and a man of the world :—and he had sacrificed more freely, both to Venus and to Bacchus, than his biographer is willing to allow ; his religious opinions were narrow, bigotted, and unworthy a man of exalted mind ; in fact, he was not a great man ; he was a good man, and a man of uncommon learning, and when we have said that, little more remains to be said of him ; but if we believe the noble author of his life, he was a man possessed of every excellence, and without a single fault.

57

P. 92. "*Clarendon excels all historians.*" There is a sameness, however, in his manner of drawing characters, which makes him what is stiled in painting a mannerist.

52

P. 92. "*His Richard, &c.*" These three characters differ materially in this respect. The first represents the whole man, his general character through life, cunning, cruel, and ambitious. The other two are only shewn to us under the influence of particular passions—the one ambition, the other jealousy. The progress of these passions is accurately marked, from the first slight spark, to their full blaze.

53

P. 95. "*Decided at length for the Athenians.*" See Gillies, vol. iii. Xenoph. Hist. lib. i. chap. 5, 6.

54

P. 95. "*In the lower.*" Mr Owen in his very excellent Essays on the Human Character, seems to mistake character for morals and habits. The former depends on circumstances which no human wisdom can control, the latter depend altogether on instruction and education.

55

P. 104. "*Bribed.*" A singular story is told of his

temperance and frugality. It has also been said of Shippen, but was not true of both. The story, V. *Life of Marvel*, vol. iii. of his works, p. 463., reminds me of a beautiful Greek Epigram, which contains a similar idea :—

οὐδὲ παρ' ἑφέν

Στησομαι οἷδ' ὀλίγης δαίτης ἐλευθέρῃ

Anthologia, Ed. Bosch. vol. i. p. 48.

P. 105. "*Except one.*" It cannot here be doubted that I mean the administration of Pitt, to which that of Walpole was innocence and purity. It is to this man's violent opposition to the French Revolution, that we owe all the calamities it has occasioned. 56

P. 106. "*Advocate of liberty.*" It is a singular fact, and serves to shew how little trust is to be given to party distinctions, that we are indebted to the Tories for many patriotic speeches and measures, and that the most severe deprivations of our liberty and property have originated with the Whigs. 57

P. 107. "*Income.*" He was married to a woman of immense fortune, one of the daughters and co-heiresses of Sir Richard Stote, of Stote's House, in the county of Northumberland. He had a hired house at Richmond, but frequently spent the summer in the North among his wife's relations; and the old family mansion, in the vicinity of Newcastle, which was so often honored with his presence, is yet in existence, tho' in the possession of strangers. The three daughters of Sir Richard Stote, Tong, Shippen, and Windsor, all dying without issue or heirs, their estates became the property of the first occupant, and are now in the hands of various possessors; 58

but the name of Shippen has added an interest to the family, which they could otherwise never have excited. The residence of Shippen, in the winter, was in Norfolk-street in the Strand, and was the rendezvous of men of rank, learning, and talents, who were drawn thither by the attraction of his cheerful society.—He lived and died a rare example of virtue in degenerate times.

59

P. 108. "*Their leader.*" The same spirit which animated the resistance to Charles V. burst out afresh in opposition to Bonaparte, and I have the happiness to number among the list of my friends, the man who first took up arms in the province of the Austurias. Don Alvaro Florez Estrada, for two years opposed the power of the French, till the government he formed was dissolved by the Marquis de Romana. Should this virtuous man ever publish his history of the Revolution in that province, it will explain the secret causes of all its movements.

V. El Espagnol, Tomo 2do. p. 129.

60

P. 108. "*Robertson.*" Vide Robertson's Charles 5th, vol. iii. p. 25.

61

P. 108. "*His letter to his wife, &c.*"

LETTER OF DON JOHN DE PADILLA.

"SENORA,

"If your grief did not afflict me more than my own death, I should be thoroughly happy; for the end of life being certain to all men, the Almighty confers a mark of distinguishing favor on that person for whom he appoints

a death like mine, which, tho' lamented by many, is nevertheless acceptable to Him. It will require more time than I now have, to write any thing that could afford you consolation ; that my enemies will not grant me, nor do I wish to delay the reception of that crown which I hope to enjoy. You may bewail your own loss, but not my death, which is too honorable to be lamented by any. My *soul*, for nothing else is left me, I bequeath to you. You will receive it as the thing in this world which you valued most. I do not write to my father, Pedro Lopez, because I dare not ; for tho' I have shewn myself to be his son, in daring to lose my life, I have not been the heir of his good fortune. I will not attempt to say any thing more, that I may not tire the executioner, who waits for me ; and that I may not excite a suspicion, that, to prolong my life, I lengthen out my letter. My servant Josia, an eye-witness, and to whom I have communicated my most secret thoughts, will inform you of what I cannot now write ; and thus I rest, expecting the instrument of your grief, and my deliverance."

P. 108. "*And another to the city of Toledo, &c.*" 62

HIS LETTER TO THE CITY OF TOLEDO.

"To thee, the crown of Spain and the light of the whole world ; free, from the time of the mighty Goths ; to thee, who by shedding the blood of strangers, as well as thy own blood, hast recovered liberty for thyself and thy neighbouring cities : thy legitimate son, John de Padilla, gives information how by the blood of his body thy ancient victims are to be refreshed. If fate hath not

permitted my actions to be placed among your successful and celebrated exploits, my fault hath been in my ill-fortune, not in my good will. This I request of thee as a mother to accept, since God hath given me nothing more to lose for thy sake, than that which I am now to relinquish. I am more solicitous about thy good opinion than about my own life. The shiftings of fortune, which never stand still, are many, but this I see with infinite consolation, that I, the least of thy sons, suffer death for thee, and that thou hast nursed at thy breast such as may take vengeance for my wrongs. Many tongues will relate the manner of my death, of which I am yet ignorant, tho' I know it to be near. My end will testify what was my desire. My soul I recommend to thee, as the patroness of Christianity. Of my body I say nothing, for it is not mine. I can write nothing more, for at this very moment I feel the knife at my throat, with greater dread of thy displeasure, than apprehension of my own pain.

Robertson's Hist. vol. ii. p. 239.

63

P. 109. "*Resumed the game.*" His words were, "I cannot now in my old age abandon the principles for which I early contended, nor to procure freedom for a few declining years, will I betray that good cause for which I have suffered so much, and am still willing to suffer; better for me to enjoy in this solitude the esteem of virtuous men, and the approbation of my own conscience, than return into the world with the imputation of apostacy, and thus disgrace my few remaining years."

Vide Modern Europe, vol. ii. p. 217.

64

P. 110. "*Whether he afterwards obtained, &c.*" Ro-

bertson tells us, that John Frederic, after the peace of Passau, took possession of that part of his territories which had been reserved for him, when Maurice was invested with the electoral dignity. *Vide Charles 5th, vol. iv. p. 92.*—The author of modern Europe says, that after the death of Maurice, he claimed the electoral dignity, and that part of his dominions of which he had been stripped, but the states of Saxony, forgetting the sufferings of their former master, declared in favor of Augustus, and that John Frederic died soon after this disappointment, which he bore with his usual magnanimity.

Vol. ii. p. 266.

65 P. 111. "*Was Cleon.*" *Vide Gillies' Ancient Greece, vol. ii. p. 244, and Thucydides, lib. iii. s. 36.*

P. 111. "*The Athenians.*" A similar deliberation took place at Syracuse, after the Athenians were defeated in their Sicilian expedition, and the arguments of the speakers contain all that can be said on the opposite sides of policy and humanity. 66

P. 112. "*Aristophanes.*" It is remarkable that the ridicule of Aristophanes destroyed the best and the worst man that Athens ever produced. Ridicule is a two-edged sword. 67

P. 113. "*The French Revolution.*" The authorities from whom I have derived my account of the French characters, are too numerous to be all recited. Suffice it to say, that I am indebted mostly to Bertrand's History of the Revolution, in 10 vols.; to Riouffe's *Memoirs d'un Detenu*, to Louvet's *Recit de mes Perils*, to Garat's *Memoirs*; to *Dictionnaire Biographique*, to the new edition of Roland, by Champagneaux, to Letters from Paris, 68

to Adolphus's Memoirs, and to Mercier's *Tableau de Paris*; from all of which I intend occasionally to make quotations of those parts which are most interesting and important. To some it may seem improper, that I have placed Mirabeau among the number of good characters. Tho' he was profligate in his manners and principles, yet, as he took the popular side of the question, and acted always apparently in defence of liberty, it is impossible to place him among the Robespierres, Dantons, and Barreres.

The first of his public actions was a strong proof of his influence. By his simple insinuation that it came from the Court, he was the means of getting a motion of Malouet rejected, which pledged the nation to preserve inviolate the privileges of the nobility and clergy. Malouet relates an anecdote, by which he means to insinuate that this opposition was the effect of disappointment; for having given an offer of his services to Necker, he was rejected, and from that instant vowed revenge.—“Je n'y reviendrai plus, mais ils auront des mes nouvelles.”—“I will not return again, but they shall hear of me.”—M. Bertrand de Molleville has endeavored to deprive Mirabeau of the credit of his eloquence, by affirming that most of his speeches were composed by other people. It may be so with his studied harangues, but those sudden bursts of eloquence which produced the greatest effect, must have been unpremeditated, because they were adapted to the occasion of the moment, and it is these which place his talents above all competition and praise. The first of these was pronounced in answer to the commands of the king, for each of the differ-

ent states to meet in their own chambers. They were about to depart peaceably, when Mirabeau, foreseeing that all was lost for the popular party if this measure was adopted, arrested them in a moment by the grasp of his eloquence, and compelled them to remain in their places. “Il fit malhereusement changer, en un instant, leurs dispositions par le discours suivant,” says Bertrand de Moleville.—This was not all, when the king sent his master of the ceremonies to command them to depart, Mirabeau, by another thunder-stroke, confounded the minions of the court, and fixed the resolution of the whole meeting. “We were sent here by the power of the people, and nothing shall remove us but the power of the sword,” exclaimed the patriot.—In every motion and every speech he addressed to the legislative council he was successful, except when he began, in the latter part of his life, to lean towards the court. It is needless to enumerate many instances. Whoever wishes to be fully convinced of his transcendant talents, must consult Bertrand’s History of the Revolution, who, tho’ he does not allow all his merits, cannot weaken the facts which he himself relates.

Mirabeau first shook the foundation of the throne, which others afterwards overturned. Whether such was his intention or not there can be no certainty; most probably it was not, but by the firmness, vigor, and decision, with which he inspired the national council, the court was confounded, and compelled to abandon some of its strongest measures.—The last act of weakness they committed, was that of dismissing the troops from Paris.—The firmness of the deputies, which the eloquence of Mirabeau supported, disconcerted the court, and forced

them to sign their own death warrant. The words of Mirabeau to the deputies, who were just quitting the council with an address to the king, rival, in force and grandeur, the finest specimens of Demosthenes :—"Tell him that the foreign hordes by whom the city is invested, were yesterday visited by princes, princesses, and favorites, and received their caresses, their exhortations, and their prayers ; tell him that all the night long the satellites of despotism, gorged with gold and wine, chanted in their impious songs the slavery of France, and that their savage wishes invoked the destruction of the national council ; tell him that even in his palace, his courtiers danced to the sound of this barbarous music, and that such was the prelude to the murders of St Bartholomew ; tell him that that Henry, whose memory is revered by the universe, he of all his ancestors whom he wishes to take for his model, sent provisions into the very city which had revolted against him, and now *his* ferocious ministers are stopping the supplies of grain which the natural effects of commerce are sending to the faithful, but famished capital."—*Bertrand, vol. ii.*

On another occasion, the generosity and dignity of Mirabeau's character were finely contrasted with the meanness of Robespierre's. Several deputies having proposed that all letters suspected of containing plots against liberty should be opened, Mirabeau spoke, says Bertrand, with that incensed and imperious tone for which he was so remarkable, and imposed silence on all his opponents by the most animated speech he ever pronounced, which determined the council to reject the motion. It was, however, brought forward again, and supported by Robes-

pierre, but again repelled.—*Vide Bertrand, vol. ii. p. 97.*
 —The nobleness of Mirabeau's nature was displayed still further in the support he gave to the proposal of Necker for a new system of taxation, to prevent the horrors of bankruptcy. His personal dislike to the minister caused his sincerity to be doubted, and he explained himself in one of those sudden bursts of eloquence in which no man ever excelled him.—*Vide p. 168.*

P. 119. "*A good writer.*" Champagneux, in the introduction to his edition of Roland's life and writings, tells us, that at her instigation he composed, during his imprisonment, a Political Testament, which those who saw it consider as superior to any of his former writings. "Experience (says Champagneux), had tempered the fire of his imagination, but it had strengthened his reason and judgment. He there painted the situation of France in colours so lively and so true; he had so forcibly torn the mask from the tyrants that oppressed her, that the destruction of their power must have been the infallible consequence of its publication. The book had already quitted the barriers of the prison, and was printed, when Robespierre, informed of it, condemned the whole, and even the MS. to the flames. Yet I have heard it said that one copy was saved, and is now in the hands of Citizen R. and that it soon will be published. For the truth of this I will not answer." It is ardently to be wished that it may still exist.

P. 121. "*To relate the bloody consequences.*" Among the victims of the tyrants, the female sex have been particularly distinguished for their admirable firmness in death. The general who commanded at Longwy, on its

surrender to the Prussians, was condemned to die. His wife, a beautiful young woman of four-and-twenty, when she heard the sentence pronounced, cried out, in a tone of despair, "*Vive le Roi!*" She was immediately sent to the scaffold. Her husband, surprized at seeing her led towards the cart, for a few moments could hardly speak, and the people, shocked at the sight, cried out, "She did not deserve death." "Yes, my friends," she cried with the spirit of a heroine, "for I will not survive my husband." Fourteen young girls of Verdun had danced at a ball given by the Prussians; they were led to the scaffold together, and looked like nymphs adorned for a festival. The daughter of the famous Malesherbes, with his son-in-law, grand-son, and grand-daughter, were condemned to die together, and suffered with equal and incredible fortitude.—The Marchioness of Bois Berenger was the only one of her family not named in an act of accusation. She was overwhelmed with despair; but in a few hours the act arrived, a ray of transport darted into her countenance, and she exclaimed, "We shall now die together."

71 P. 121. "*To relate.*" The period of the French Revolution to which I now refer, resembles in many respects the state of Athens under the thirty tyrants—for an account of which see Xenophon's History, and the celebrated orations of Lysias against Eratosthenes and Agoratus.

72 P. 128. "*The recital.*" Recit de mes perils.—*Par Louvet.*

73 P. 129. "*Girey Dupre.*" On his way to the scaffold, he saw Robespierre's mistress, with her sister, and some of their ferocious accomplices at the window of their

lodging. "Down with the tyrants and dictators," he exclaimed, till he lost sight of the house. The rest of the way he sung the chorus to the patriotic air which he himself had written, *Plutôt la mort que l'esclavage*. "Rather death than slavery." The beloved sentiment he repeated to his last moment, and the half-finished sentence perished on his lips." P. 222.

Vide Letters from Paris, 1794, vol. i.

P. 136. "*In attention to her daughter.*" No mother ever did more for a daughter than she did for hers. During the third month of her nursing, she was attacked with a violent disease, which obliged her to wean the infant, but growing better, and thinking that she had not done her duty, she determined to finish what was begun, and actually undertook to bring the milk back again into her breasts; which, after excruciating pain, and with the most inflexible perseverance, she succeeded in doing. Few women would have thought of such a thing, and much fewer attempted it. She has herself related the process in a little treatise which she addressed to her daughter on nursing, in case she should ever become a mother; that daughter is now married to the son of Champagneux, who published the works of her mother.

P. 136. "*The same exact disposition, &c.*" La vue d'une fleur caresse mon imagination et flatte mes sens, à un point inexprimable. Sous le tranquille abri du toit paternelle, j'étois heureuse des l'enfance avec des fleurs & des livres; dans l'étroite enceinte d'une prison au milieu des fers imposés par la tyrannie la plus revoltante, j'oublie l'injustice des hommes, leurs sottises et mes maux, avec des livres & des fleurs.

Memoirs de Roland.

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P. 157. "*On the scaffold.*" Riouffe, in his *Memoirs d'un detenu*, has given the most interesting account of her sufferings and execution, which others have only copied. She was removed from the prison of St Pelagie to that of the Conciergerie, eight days before her trial, where he saw her, and has thus described her :—"She was tall, and elegantly formed, with a lively countenance, tho' somewhat altered by her misfortunes and imprisonment ; her eyes were large, black, and expressive, and her manners had all the polish of a court. She spoke to me frequently through the grate of her chamber with the freedom and spirit of one of the greatest men. This republican language, coming from the mouth of a woman who was at that moment devoted to sacrifice, was one of the miracles of the revolution to which we were not yet accustomed. Every one listened to her with profound attention and surprise. Her conversation was serious without being cold. She expressed herself with a degree of purity and harmony, which rendered her language a species of music with which the ear could never be satisfied. She spoke of her friends who had suffered, with respect, unmingled with effeminate pity; nay, she even reproached them for not having adopted sufficiently strong measures ; sometimes, indeed, the tenderness of her sex prevailed, and she was seen to weep at the thoughts of her husband and daughter. The woman who attended her told me, "Before you, she collects all her force, but when alone, she sometimes remains for hours together leaning upon the window, and in tears." To die first, when a number were sent to the scaffold together, was considered as a privilege, and had

been allowed to her as a woman; she saw, however, many others less firm than herself, and she waved that privilege in their favor, but the executioner refused to comply, on which she turned to him with a smile of ineffable sweetness, and said, "I am sure you will not refuse the last request of a woman."—He complied, and Lamarche, one of her fellow-sufferers, was executed first. Being tied to the fatal plank, she lifted up her eyes towards the statue of Liberty, which was placed near the guillotine, and exclaimed, "O, Liberty, how art thou insulted." The next moment she perished—but her name will live for ever in the remembrance of a grateful posterity.

Sillery and La Source were imprisoned in the palace of Luxemburg at the same time with the authoress of the *Letters from Paris*, and she has eloquently described their conversation and feelings. "He and La Source (she says), composed together a little hymn, adapted to a sweet and solemn air, which they called their evening service. Every night before we parted, they sung this simple dirge in a low tone, to prevent their being heard in the other apartments, which rendered it still more plaintive. These mournful sounds, the knell of my departed friends, yet thrill upon my heart."

P. 140. "*He courted the multitude.*" On Friday the 10th of May, he pronounced the famous speech which raised his popularity to its height. The people believed all he said, and, if he had meant what he professed, they might have been happy. Speaking in terms of reprobation of their former government, he says, "They have kings, and priests, and nobles,

and bourgeois, and canaille, but no such thing as people, no such thing as men."—"Establish this incontestible maxim, that the people are good, and their delegate corruptible." "The corruption of a government has its source in the excess of its power, and its independence on its true sovereign, the people."—"There is but one tribune of the people I love, and that is the people themselves."—Let all the proceedings of the representative body be transacted under the eyes of thousands of their constituents.—His speeches and reports, which are all excellent, were said to be written by La Clos, well known by his share in the Orleans' party, and for his infamous novel, *Liaisons Dangereuses*.—This is one, among many other proofs, of the means by which he gained an ascendancy over the people, and finally obtained his purpose.

78 P. 140. "*The simplicity of his manners.*" At his first appearance in the world, he obtained a few partizans, who were called the chasseurs of Robespierre. They constantly proclaimed his praises in public and in private, and helped forward his rising reputation by every means in their power. On the last day of the Constituent Assembly, they prepared a hackney coach for him and Petion, who was at that time his friend. They took out the horses, drew it themselves, and crowned their hero with leaves of oak. Among the chiefs of this band was the family of one Dupleix, a cabinet-maker; himself, his wife, his son, and his two daughters. He seemed to have introduced a new sort of religion, of which they were the preachers, and in different parts of the city they harangued the mob, on the merits of the sect and its leader. He at last became for a while a resident in their

house, and one of the daughters was his mistress. He exercised the same tyranny over the rest of the family which the women did over him. In the early part of his career, he lodged at the house of a washer-woman, in a miserable room, furnished with old ragged hangings, an old broken glass, a few broken chairs, and a table.

Vide Tableau d' Europe par Peltier, vol. i.

P. 142. "*Republic of Jack Cade.*" *Vide Henry VI. part 2d.*

P. 142. "*To love, &c.*" His own brother was never beloved by him; and his sister, when she came to Paris on purpose to remonstrate with him on his cruelty, he repulsed with the most inhuman violence. He said, on the denunciation of Danton, "I was the friend of Petion, of Roland, and of Brissot; they conspired against liberty, and I declared against them. Danton wishes to take their place, and I see in Danton only the enemy of his country." Plutarch relates nearly the same circumstance of Cleon.—Πολιτικά Παραγγέλματα. cap. 13.

The day on which he arrested his old friend Camille Desmoulins, he invited him to dinner, and, at parting, still professed for him the highest regard.

P. 142. "*Those who had been his tools, &c.*" Among these the first were Freron and Tallien, men covered with blood and crimes.

P. 143. "*He converted the nation, &c.*" "All Frenchmen are soldiers. Private property must be employed to public use. Enjoyments are no longer individual, they are converted into a public mass."—"Placed in the midst of Europe, under the most serene atmosphere, and on a territory the most fertile; possessing men the most in-

dustrious, and surrounded by limits formed by the protecting hand of nature ; too powerful to fear, too great to wish for any thing but a pure representation and a vigorous government. Such a government, with cannon, bayonets, and powder, are your only wants."

Vide Debretts State Papers, vol. i. p. 53.

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P. 143. "*Infamy.*" The best account which is extant of the views and sentiments of Robespierre, was published by a young man of the name of Vilate, who had come to Paris early in the revolution, to partake in the triumphs of liberty. He was one of the dupes of Robespierre, and was so far led astray, as to believe that the cause of liberty could be advanced by murder and proscription, and became one of the revolutionary tribunal. He soon repented of his errors, and after the death of the tyrant, published his *Causes Secretes de la Revolution du 9 and 10 Thermidor*. The object of Robespierre and his crew, it is to be gathered from this book, was to cut off every man or woman who could in any shape oppose their Agrarian system. The whole of society was to be constituted upon a new model, and all who had possessed distinctions of any sort under the former state of things were to be massacred. Such an idea, perhaps, never entered into the head of any human being before, and it is to be hoped it never will again, if he has any power to act upon it. It is mischievous in every possible light, for besides the misery it created for the time, it has retarded the progress of liberty in France, for many, many years, and rendered her very name odious to the rest of the civilized globe.

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P. 146. "*Seemed to sigh, &c.*" Danton, in his last

moments, while in the dungeon of the Conciergerie, lamented the part he had taken in the revolution, and expressed a wish that he had never quitted his residence at D'Arcy, to mix in the tumult and confusion of the world. He spoke of it with the greatest contempt; yet it was not that philosophic contempt which is mingled with pity and benevolence, but the mere effusion of disappointment.—Such confessions are the nauseous fruits of revolutions, in which, as Danton said, “the greatest rascals are always uppermost.”—“It is better to be a poor fisherman,” he exclaimed, “than to govern men.” “The fools,” said he, “will cry, ‘Long live the republic,’ on seeing me go to the scaffold.”—He died with the same bold and dauntless spirit with which he had lived.

85 P. 146. “*Punished.*” A few days before his arrest, Danton, by means of a common friend, obtained an interview with the tyrant; after a long conversation, finding that he was unable to save himself, he exclaimed, on leaving the room, “I perceive that my lot is decided; but my fall will hasten yours.” A little before he went to the scaffold, he said to those who were present, “This day last year I caused the Revolutionary Tribunal to be instituted. I ask pardon for it, of God and man! It was not that it should become the scourge of humanity, but to prevent the renewal of the massacres of the 1st and 2d of September.”

P. 146. “*His former guilt.*” The sublime reply of Danton, on his trial, when he was asked his name and residence, deserves to be remembered: “My residence,” said he “will soon be in non-entity, but my name will live in the Pantheon of history.” 86

87 P. 146. "*A royalist writer.*" M. Montjoye, who has written the History of the Orleans' Conspiracy, and the Panegyric of Louis XVI.

88 P. 147. "*Infamous ancestor.*" For an account of the Regent Duke of Orleans, see *Œuvres Posthumes de Marmontel*; *Memoires de Richelieu*; and *Vie Privée de Louis XV.*

89 P. 147. "*His royal relations.*" "I am persuaded," says the editor of his correspondence, "that his desire of vengeance, for the insults offered him by the queen, was the principal motive of his actions."

90 P. 148. "*Mont Rouge.*" Vide Bertrand de Molleville, vol. 2d, p. 13.

91 P. 149. "*The money of Orleans.*" There can be little doubt of this, after the publication of the Proceedings of the Chatalet.

92 P. 150. "*The natural daughter.*" The interesting narrative of this lady was published by herself in 1798, and contains a series of adventures almost romantic.—Many have doubted her pretensions to be the daughter of the Prince of Conti; but Mercier, in his last Picture of Paris, speaks of her as such, and says, "Stephanie Louise de Bourbon Conti, the pupil of Rousseau, whose principles she seems to have followed, advertises, that till the fate of the Bourbons is fixed, she gives lessons to young ladies in writing, in orthography, mathematics, drawing, and morality, with some knowledge of logic, geography, mythology, &c." *Mercier, vol. 5.*

93 P. 152. "*That famous palace.*" "It was frequently affirmed," says the editor of the Correspondence, "that Orleans was so much in debt, that he had sold almost every

thing, even to his linen. After his death, I visited every part of his house very minutely. His linen was not only entire, but laid up with great exactness in a room on purpose. There were also a great many curiosities of different sorts, and a large collection of medals, many of them gold, and of a great size; and many little articles of furniture, adorned with the same metal. In the wardrobe was an immense quantity of shoe buckles, sufficient to set up a jeweller's shop; and a great number of canes, pipes, and pocket-books, of all shapes and sizes, arranged with the greatest regularity; the canes in racks, the pipes in boxes, and the pocket-books in drawers. One apartment seemed to be destined to the sacrifices of love, for the walls were covered with a kind of moving pictures, which, by means of a spring, could be turned to represent every species of obscenity. His bed-chamber shewed how much he had sacrificed to Bacchus. The curtains and sofa were covered with the effects of a recent debauch; in short, from all that I saw, I am satisfied that Priapus and Bacchus had not a more fervent admirer." *Vide Preface.*

P. 152. "*Trimalchio.*" *Vide Petronius Arbiter.*

P. 152. "*Monks of Medmenham.*" *Vide Adventures of a Guinea, by Charles Johnson, where the account of that famous fraternity is not altogether correctly given.*

P. 152. "*The strongest evidence.*" By the editor of the Correspondence, and by all the newspapers then published.

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NOTES

To the Essay on Feelings.

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IN describing the operations of the mind, the greatest accuracy of ideas and language is required; without the first, we are confused ourselves; without the latter, we must confuse our readers; and yet even the first rate philosophers have confounded three things which are in their nature totally distinct, viz. feelings, passions, and sentiments. The two first are the most nearly allied, and are therefore frequently mistaken for each other. Passions are only feelings in excess, but sentiments are the result of deliberate reflection. Sorrow is a feeling, but grief is a passion; resentment ripens into revenge, dislike becomes hatred, preference rises into love, and emulation begets envy, malice, and jealousy.—Dr. Adam Smith, in the first page of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, has fallen into a wonderful error in expressing himself on the nature of pity or compassion. “How selfish soever,” says he, “man may be supposed, there is evidently some *principles* in his nature which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, tho’ he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is *pity* or *compassion*; the *emotion* which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of

others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this *sentiment*, like all the other original *passions* of human nature, is by no means limited to the virtuous and 'humane, tho' perhaps they may feel it with the most exquisite *sensibility*."—Now here are four things confounded together, which are all essentially different: Pity is not a principle, but a feeling, for principles are the effect of deliberate judgment, and feelings are the sudden result of perceptions. He was right in calling pity an emotion, for emotion and feeling are nearly synonymous terms; but he is wrong again in calling it a sentiment, and more so in calling it a passion, for the reasons above mentioned.—When such men as Adam Smith are deceived by popular language, it is not to be wondered that the vulgar do not always express themselves accurately.

David Hume, who was not a man of sensibility or feeling, has an essay on Delicacy of Taste and Passion. The title of the essay is faulty, therefore we are not to expect much from the contents. It is, indeed, a subject on which, of all others, he was least qualified to write, because he was required to express those feelings which he did not possess. "Some people," says he, "are subject to a certain delicacy of passion." The word *subject* is most unhappily chosen, for it rather gives us the idea of a disease than a disposition; and such, indeed, he considered it, for, a little after, he says that "men of cool and sedate tempers are more to be envied than those who possess lively sensibility." He calls joy and resentment *passions*, whereas they are only feelings. "Delicacy of passion" we should

certainly read "Delicacy of feeling," for none of the passions are very gentle or delicate; tho' he afterwards confesses that this delicacy of *passion* enlarges the sphere of our happiness or misery, and makes us sensible to pains, as well as pleasures, which never touch the rest of mankind; and yet he says again, that this delicacy of passion is to be lamented, and remedied if possible.— He then proposes delicacy of taste as a cure for delicacy of passion; but he corrects himself, and says, "it rather improves our *sensibility* for all the tender and agreeable *passions*," which is downright nonsense. "Susceptibility" might have answered the purpose, for *passions* we should read *emotions*, and for *emotions* we should substitute the word *passions*, when he says, that, "delicacy of taste renders the mind incapable of the rougher and more boisterous *emotions*." How delicacy of taste or sentiment are compatible "with the gaiety or frolic of a bottle companion," Mr Hume probably well understood, but they are not generally found together. Sentiments, feelings, and passions, are all different movements of the mind, which are frequently confounded by inaccurate writers. An attention to this distinction, will induce an accuracy of thinking and language which is of infinite importance to the happiness of society; for nothing has caused so much confusion, as calling things by wrong names.

98 P. 159. "*Rough language*,"

"Lacrymas dedit hæc nostri pars optima sensus."

Juvenal, sat. xvi. v. 193.

99 P. 166. "*Refuse like the poet*."

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modis

Tam chari capitis?

Horace, Od. lib. i. 24.

P. 173. "*Old women.*" The hapless fate of these poor women is pathetically lamented by our modern Theocritus, Allan Ramsay, whose Doric dialect unfortunately conceals many of his beauties.

Mause.—Hard luck alack when poverty and eild,
Weeds out o' fashion, and a lonely bield,
Wie a sma' cast o' wiles, should in a twitch
Gie ane the hatefu' name, "A wrinkled witch."

Vide Gentle Shepherd, Act 2d, sc. 3d.

P. 174. "*In a well regulated country.*" Colonel Symes, in his interesting account of the embassy to Ava, tells us, that in the Birmin nation "a common beggar is no where to be seen; every individual is certain of receiving sustenance, which, if he cannot procure by his own labor, is provided for him by others."

Vol. ii. p. 389.

P. 175. "*Instances, &c.*" Tacitus, in the 13th book of his Annals, gives a remarkable instance of the effects of timely severity, in restoring the discipline of an army. Corbulo had been sent to take the command of troops who had grown indolent by a long peace and continued residence in the enervating country of Syria. "Nec enim ut in aliis exercitibus, primum alterumque delictum venia prosequabatur; sed qui signa reliquerat statim capite pœnas luebat, idque usu salubre et misericordiâ melius apparuit. Quippe pauciores illa castra deseruere quam ea in quibus ignoscebatur."

Cap. 35.

P. 180. "*Public sensations.*" I remember some years

ago, when a great flood threatened to destroy half the property of a fen country, the people of a certain village stood in crowds upon their banks, with anxious expectation, to watch the course of the water, and when they found it was taking an opposite direction to theirs, and destroying the dykes of another village, they set up a shout of joy, rang the bells of the church, and had their houses illuminated. The story was related in the papers, and they were stigmatized as savages; yet they were not more savages than those who rejoice at a victory, in which thousands of innocent men lose their lives.

The world, perhaps, never produced an occasion on which public demonstrations of joy and sensibility were more generally, more properly, or more temperately expressed, than at the conclusion of that peace by which the Americans established their independence. The overflowings of gratitude to their great deliverer, Washington, were unbounded, yet unalloyed by a single instance of excess or intemperance; all ranks and ages joined in the general exultation, and tears of sensibility flowed from the eyes of thousands, as an involuntary tribute of their feelings. When the general accepted the office of President, the same scene was renewed, and the historian tells us, that, on his landing at New York, "universal joy diffused itself through every rank of people;" but when he took the oath of office in the presence of the multitude, he says, "a solemn silence prevailed among the spectators at this part of the ceremony; it was a minute of the most sublime political joy." For the whole account, I refer to Ramsay's *History of the American Revolution*, in 2 vols. 8vo. the best which has yet been published.

P. 184. "*Drunkenness.*" V. Goldsmith's Traveller, where he has expressed nearly the same idea.

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"In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till buried in debauch the bliss expire."

P. 194. "*Past delights.*" The Swiss, the Welsh, and all nations, whose pleasures are few and simple, are remarkable for attachment to their country. "Experience has proved, that the northern are, of all nations, the most attached to their country, and of all northern nations, the barbarous people of Lapland and the northern parts of Siberia feel this *amor patriæ* the strongest. They cannot exist out of their native desarts. Every individual among them who had been brought away by the Danish, Swedish, or Russian governments actually died of grief! The most gentle treatment, the most flattering distinctions, seemed to have no other effect, than to raise in their minds a sad contrast between luxury and politeness on the one hand, and rough, innocent homeliness on the other."

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Vide Swinton's Travels in Russia, vol. i. p. 498.

P. 195. "*Who that possesses a spark.*" The following lines, make part of an unfinished poem, which will most probably never be published, tho' announced for publication ten years since.

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THE PROSTITUTE.

BY T. LISTER.

"POOR profligate ! I will not chide thy sins :
What, tho' the coldly virtuous turn away,
And the proud priest shall stalk indignant by,

And deem himself polluted should he hold
 A moment's converse with thy guilty soul,
 Yet thou shalt have my tear.—To such as thou,
 Sinful, abas'd, and unbefriended, came
 The world's great Saviour; from his gentle lip
 Nor word of high reproof or bitter scorn
 Fell chilly; but his exhortation mild
 Bade the meek radiance of celestial hope
 Beam on the faded brow: 'Who first shall throw
 'Against this woman the accusing stone?'
 Hear this ye hard reprovers of mankind,
 Ye to the charms of taste and fancy dead,
 Who thro' the world's tumultuous passage keep
 Your cold and even tenor; hear and blush
 Ye unkind comforters, who as ye pour
 The nauseous poison of the keen reproof
 In pharisaic spleen, are studious more
 To boast the virtues of your own proud hearts,
 Than medicine with hope the trembling wretch
 That calls on you to bless his parting breath.

Yes, hapless outcast! thou shalt have my tear;
 Thou once wast fairer than the morning light,
 Thy breast unsullied as the meadow's flower
 Wash'd by the dews of May. What if thine eye
 Once eloquent to speak the soul's pure thought
 Dart with insidious leer the lustful glance?
 What if the breast, which in thy morn of life,
 Just kindling to the infant thought of love,
 Trembled in sweet confusion, rudely now
 Pant with fierce passion and more fierce despair?

What if thine alter'd voice, no longer soft
 Or plaintive, hoarsely meet the startled ear
 With horrid imprecation? Not on thee
 Shall fall the curse of Heaven, but on the wretch,
 Fell as the lion on Numidia's wilds,
 That with blood-streaming fangs and bristling mane
 Growls o'er his human banquet—on the wretch
 Who, dress'd in sunny smiles and April tears,
 Won on thy virgin heart, and having cropt
 Briefly, the luscious flower of thy young love,
 Soon left thee as the poor and naked stalk
 Now worthless, to abide the wintry blast,—
 The chilling tempest of the world's proud scorn.

Say when with falt'ring tongue and downcast eye
 He spake delicious music, and thine heart
 Suspected not deceit, and as he press'd
 Thy throbbing bosom to his burning lips
 O'er all thy frame the soft delirium stole,
 Oh could thy cheated fancy dare to think
 That one so dear to thy deluded heart,
 So prodigal of vows, could coldly turn
 And smile on thy undoing as the theme
 Of youthful triumph? Yes, he left thee thus,
 Thy parent's curse, the world's unpitied scorn,
 To earn the fleeting wages of disgrace,
 Thy sad remains of life to linger out
 In hopeless prostitution.—Dead to shame
 And penitence, which all would now refuse,
 And shun thee as the pestilential blight,
 No hope awaits thee, but in Him alone

Who knows each secret spring that moves the heart,
And with no narrow justice rules the world.

Farewell, poor profligate ! and as I give
The trifle to avert to morrow's want,
Should no licentious drunkard make thee rich,
Oh could I to thy bosom's hell impart
One ray of that pure light of virtuous thought,
Which ere the foul seducer ravening came,
Glow'd with mild radiance in thine angel face !"

107 P. 196. "*Many a tender.*" Catullus has lamented the death of Lesbia's sparrow in strains so simple and elegant, as to avoid being ludicrous on a trifling subject, and yet he seems himself sometimes to smile. "*Lugete veneris cupidinesque,*" borders on the burlesque without being ridiculous.—Mr Rogers, meaning to be serious in his elegy of a Tear, has proved only laughable :—

" O that the chymist's magic art
" Could chrystalize this sacred treasure !
" Long should it glitter near my heart
" A sacred source of pensive pleasure."

This is the mere whine of poetry.—The Anthologia contains elegies on flies, locusts, and grasshoppers, which, if they were not written in Greek would be thought ridiculous.

108 P. 196. "*The feelings of individuals.*" Among the many instances which may be produced from ancient history, of the interest which the people of Rome and Athens took in every thing relating to the public, the account given by Thucydides, of the departure of the

famous expedition for Sicily, is by much the most animating; the whole ceremony was solemn, pathetic, and impressive.—I will not attempt to describe it, but refer my learned readers to the page of the historian, lib. 6, cap. 30. In proportion to their hopes and doubts of its success, their consternation was great on the news of its failure.—*Vide Thucid. lib. 8. c. 1.*

Herodotus gives a remarkable instance of public sensibility in the punishment of Phrynicus, for having brought out a play called the *Capture of Miletus*, which so much affected the feelings of the audience that they all burst into tears, because it reminded them of their own misfortunes.—The author was fined a large sum and the play was forbidden to be again represented.

Vide Herod. lib. 6. c. 21.

P. 197. "*Great men.*" Modern history can produce no example in which the sensibility of the public was so strongly excited by the distresses of an individual, as in the instance of Maria Teresa, queen of Hungary, and afterwards empress of Germany. Not only her own country sympathized with her misfortunes, but all European nations, who had no share in the guilt of their cause. England in particular distinguished herself by a generous support of the queen's sinking fortunes, and, at the time, every Englishman had her portrait in his house, which he almost wept over, and regarded with superstitious reverence, when he thought of her beauty and her sufferings. The account given by Wraxall, in his anecdotes of the different courts of Europe, vol. ii, p. 300, of her oration to the states of Hungary, and her presenting to them her infant son,

even now are sufficient to excite a tear of sensibility. Her address, her beauty and the sight of her child, had such an effect on them, that they instantly drew their swords, and exclaimed, "Our lives and our blood for your majesty!" and they never laid down their arms, till they finally placed her on the throne of Austria.

The affection of the Americans for Washington was shewn on all occasions, but never more than when he took leave of his army. "The hour now approached, when he was to take leave of his officers, who had been endeared to him by a long series of common sufferings and dangers. Being previously assembled for the purpose, General Washington joined them, and calling for a glass of wine, he thus addressed them:—"With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take my leave of you; I most devoutly wish that your latter years may be prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."—The officers then came up successively, and he took an affectionate leave of them. When this tender scene was over, he left the room, and passed through a corps of infantry to the vessel; the officers followed in mute procession, with dejected countenances. On entering the barge to cross the river, he turned to the companions of his glory, and, by waving his hat, bade them a silent adieu. Some of them answered this last signal of respect and affection with tears, and all of them gazed upon the barge which conveyed him from their sight, till they could no longer distinguish the person of their beloved commander."

Vide Ramsay's Hist. Am. Rev. vol. ii. p. 330.

P. 197. "The sensibility of infants." On this subject

I am happy to find my opinion confirmed by the amiable Madame Roland in her *Essay on Sensibility*, vol. iii. p. 114. "Sensibility," says she, "ought either to be considered as a quality of the soul, or the result of organization; in either case, it depends, with some restrictions, entirely on education." Sensibility she considers as the source of all great actions; what is the love of glory, but a lively sensibility to the opinion of the public." A man may be coldly virtuous, but he cannot be great or amiable without sensibility.

P. 207. "*Men who are.*" A remarkable instance of feeling is to be met with in the *Memoirs of Bertrand de Moleville*, which shews that men may be cruel in one thing and humane in another, and that nothing is to be wondered at in the history of human inconsistency.

Vol. iii. p. 134, to p. 144.

P. 209. "*A moralist.*" The new *Moral Tales of Marмонтel* are the best adapted of any book of amusement to form the hearts of young persons to virtue and sensibility; imagination was never better employed in the service of truth, nor morality taught with so much animation.

P. 209. "*A poet without sensibility.*" Yet many such there are, both amongst our own poets and those of other countries. The different species of poetry in which the Greeks and Romans excelled, required not any great display of the tender feelings. Euripides, Bion, and Moschus, are the only poets of the Greeks who are remarkable for pathos and sensibility; Virgil, Tibullus, and Propertius, among the Latins. Our own poets have not, till later times, cultivated the tender muse; and Dryden and Milton are seldom pathetic, tho' frequently elevated and

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sublime. Pope's forte was not pathos, tho' there are two of his pieces which excel in that species. Gray and Gay were truly poets of sensibility. Were I to name all the rest who are eminent for their tenderness of feeling and delicacy of sentiment, I might swell the list to an enormous length. I will leave my readers to select those who deserve the preference.

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P. 2109 "*A player.*" Diderot wrote a treatise to prove that a man who has feeling can never be a good player.

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P. 2009 "*The sensibility of women.*" Travellers, poets, and moralists, all bear testimony to the tenderness of female hearts. A soul of greater sensibility never dwelt in a human body, than that of Mr. Ledyard, the traveller employed by the African society for discovering the interior parts of that country. "I have always remarked," says he, "that women, in all countries, are civil, obliging, tender, and humane; that they are ever inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest; that they do not hesitate, like men, to perform a generous action. Not haughty, not arrogant, not supercilious; they are full of courtesy and fond of society; more liable in general to err than men, but in general also more virtuous. To a woman, whether civilized or savage, I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. With men it has been frequently otherwise; if hungry, dry, cold, wet or sick, the women have ever been friendly to me, and uniformly so; and to add to this, their actions have been performed in so free and so kind a manner, that, if I was dry, I drank the sweetest draught, and

if hungry, I eat the sweetest morsel with a double relish.

Vide Proceedings of the African Society, p. 65.

Tho' many of the poets have spoken harshly of women, yet there are many more who have done ample justice to their good qualities. St. Lambert, in his *Principles of Morals*, has given an "Analysis of Women," in which the poet, the man of the world, and the philosopher, unite to do justice to the virtues, to palliate the defects, and to suggest the improvement of the female character. The sensibility of women was never more amiably displayed, than in the late Mary Wolstonecraft. In her travels through Norway, her heart seems to bleed at every line; we see there a woman of the finest feelings suffering from neglect and cruelty, and pouring forth her mournful complaints, in language the most ardent and pathetic. A few specimens may serve to convince the reader that English prose can hardly boast of any thing more exquisite.

"Nothing, in fact, can equal the beauty of the northern summer's evening and night; if night it may be called that only wants the glare of day, for I could write at midnight very well without a candle. I contemplated all nature at rest; the rocks even grown darker in their appearance, looked as if they partook of the general repose, and reclined more heavily on their foundation.—What, I exclaimed, is this active principle which keeps me still awake? Why fly my thoughts abroad when every thing around me appears at home? My child was sleeping with equal calmness—innocent and sweet as the closing flowers.—Some recollections, attached to the idea of home, mingled with reflections respecting the state of society I had been contemplating that evening, made a

tear drop on the rosy cheek I had just kissed, and emotions that trembled on the brink of extacy and agony, gave a poignancy to my sensations, which made me feel more alive than usual."

"The cow's bell had ceased to tinkle the herd to rest; they have all paced across the heath. Is not this the witching time of night? The waters murmur, and fall with more than mortal music, and spirits of peace walk abroad to calm the agitated breast: Eternity is in these moments; worldly cares melt into the airy stuff that dreams are made of; and reveries, mild and enchanting as the first hopes of love, carry the hapless wight into futurity, who, in bustling life, has vainly strove to throw off the grief which lies heavy at the heart."

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P. 210. "*Which the Persians attribute.*" Gibbon tells us, that "the great and fundamental article of the system of Zoroaster was the belief of two principles, Ormusd and Ahriman. After a long conflict, the former is to prevail, and virtue finally to maintain the peace and harmony of the universe." Vol. i. p. 321. Here is contained the doctrine of a future life, which has been the grand article in all systems of religious faith.

NOTES

To the Essay on Education.

PREFACE.

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 AMONG the many writers on the subject of education, it is perhaps easier for a man of leisure to read all, than to select; yet I will confess that I have read very few; and of those whom I have looked into, I have found so many who write from theory rather than from experience, and so many who merely adopt received notions and prejudices, that I chose rather to avoid their errors than to censure them, and to be guided more by my own experience than by the opinions of others. I have, therefore, been very sparing in quotations from those who have written professedly on education, and have omitted to read many authors whose books were recommended to me, lest I should be thought to have borrowed from other people. If, therefore, any coincidence of ideas should be found, it must be imputed rather to chance than to design; for I again affirm, that the matter of the notes was not sought for till after the text was composed. It is also a great satisfaction to say that so far, my expectations of my own children have been fully answered.

P. 212. "Education." ΑΛΛ' ὅτι δὲ λόγος ἡμῶν ὁμολογηθεὶς μάλιστα ὡς οἷος περὶ παιδείας διευμένους σχεδὸν ἀγνοοῖ γίνονται. — *U. Plato de Legibus. Ed. Bignon. vol. 8th, in which are many excellent remarks on Education.* 110

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P. 217. "*Flannel.*" For the use and virtues of flannel, see Willich on Diet and Regimen, p. 261-8. The use of flannel I should by no means recommend for children after the first few months, (if they are born in winter), except they are tender and unhealthy. To adults it is an excellent preservative against rheumatic and consumptive complaints, particularly to those who are exposed to frequent changes of weather, or much out in the air. I have known many a poor man who, working in damp and unwholesome situations, might have been saved by the use of flannel, and many others who, in different situations, have lost their lives from the want of such a defence. Count Rumford, a man whose authority passes for much in the world, says of flannel, "I am surprised the custom of wearing flannel next the skin should not have prevailed more universally;" I suppose the Count means "more generally." "I am confident it might prevent a multitude of diseases. It is a mistaken notion that it is too warm a clothing for summer: I have worn it in the hottest climates, and in all seasons of the year, and never found the least inconvenience from it." He then proceeds to enquire into the physical cause of its effects, and says, "if any thing he has said or done should induce others to make a trial of that from which I have so long experienced the greatest advantage, it will give me the greatest pleasure."

Vide Philosop. Papers, vol. i. p. 264.

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P. 218. "*Exposed to the cold.*" See Beddoes on Consumptions, p. 20.—"Some years ago for want of understanding the difference between the effect of momentary and continued exposure to the cold, dan-

gerous mistakes have been committed. In many families, children were kept continually shivering under light clothing, and in cold apartments; of those whom this severe discipline has rendered invalids, a few survive; but the great majority has perished by mesenteric atrophy, by consumption, or by some disease of debility." Dr. Willich, says, "The use of the cold bath, as far as relates to the treatment of children, is dangerous; the requisite degrees of heat should be regulated according to the age and strength of the child. In summer, the water in which a child is bathed should be exposed to the sun, which will impart an agreeable and congenial warmth; but neither children nor grown persons should ever go into the water with full stomachs, nor ever come out of it without being well rubbed and dried. Persons little accustomed to reflect on these subjects, have no ideas of the salutary effects of the simple means here recommended, viz. washing, bathing, and airing."—He next adverts to the custom of laying children upon soft feather beds, which he conceives to be a thing the most detrimental to the health of man at all periods of his life, but particularly in the first. Thin coverings are the most wholesome in summer; they should be proportioned to the state of the weather. Cleanliness, at all ages, he says, is most conducive to health; children should have clean linen every day where it can be afforded.

Vide Introduction to Lectures on Diet and Regimen, p. 82.

P. 220. "The food." A few fanciful and theoretical men, in different ages, have taken it into their heads, that it is cruel, unjust, and unnatural to eat the flesh

of beasts. Pythagoras was one of the first we hear of, Plutarch and Porphyry have written treatises on the subject. It matters not how many arguments may be brought against the custom, from reason and theory—there is one argument for it, worth them all, which is its general utility in cold climates at least, and this must determine the value of all the rules and practices of mankind. The great fault is not in eating flesh, but in eating too much of it.

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P. 221. "*Soups.*" All strong stimulants such as salt, mustard, seasonings, wine and spirits, are improper for children, they weaken the digestive powers by urging them on too quickly; I consider them as combustibles put into the stomach to blow up the constitution. By weakly persons they may be used with moderation as medicines, but to healthy people the frequent use of them is a gentle suicide—they are spurs and whips to the constitution which wear it out in the end.

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P. 221. "*A quantity of sweet things.*" "Tho' it has frequently been maintained that sugar injures the teeth, it is not true; it is only by vitiating the stomach that the teeth become affected. If used moderately, it promotes digestion; if not, it has a contrary tendency. The finest sort of sugar being free from all impurities, is the best and most wholesome."

See Willich, p. 427.

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P. 221. "*Pastry.*" The various compositions prepared by the pastry cook and the confectioner would be less objectionable if any method could be devised to bake them without the pernicious ingredients of yeast and fat, which load the stomach with glutinous slime

and rancid matter, and obstruct the glands of the abdomen, particularly those of the mesentery."

See Willich on Diet and Regimen, p. 77.

"Fat and marrow are difficult to be digested; they require a powerful stomach, and agree best with those persons who take much exercise. If not duly digested, they occasion diarrhœa, weaken the stomach and bowels, stimulate too much by their acrimony, and easily turn rancid, especially when eaten with meat much disposed to be putrid, they are apt to destroy the elasticity of the first passages as well as of the whole body, to produce the heart-burn, cramp of the stomach, and head ache, and at length to generate an impure and acrimonious blood"

See Willich, p. 332.

P. 221. "*Indulgence.*" Democritus said "Ambitiosam mensam fortuna, parcam virtus apponit," and Cato the censor "*Cura cibi, magna incuria virtutis.*" The aphorism of Democritus is not mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius, nor by Menage in his copious and learned notes—it is quoted in Latin by Ammianus Marcellinus.

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P. 221. "*Tea.*" Dr. Willich says, "The relaxation which tea occasions in the first passages, renders it peculiarly hurtful to females of lax fibres. The cold stomach which is proposed to be relieved by hot tea, is a mere farce, for this sensation of cold is nothing but relaxation, which, instead of being removed by hot liquors, is increased by every repetition. The Chinese have good reason to smile at our taste, when we actually possess many herbs much better calculated to invigorate our stomach and revive our spirits than tea, which we purchase of them at an immense expence."—*See Lectures on Diet, p. 415.*

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p 127 P. 229. "*Early accustomed.*" The Germans, who are laborious in every thing, have invented a number of exercises for studious youth, to prevent the ill effects of a life too sedentary; some of them are rather ridiculous, and Professor Salzmann has published *A system of Gymnastics for Youth*, with plates, the most of which resemble the antics of a posture-master. That studious men often injure their health for want of exercise, is a fact that cannot be doubted; it is therefore to be wished, that those who are the most desirous of improving their minds, should pay due attention to their bodies; all exercises which have a tendency to promote this useful purpose, should be recommended to youth, and there are many to be found which are neither ridiculous, dangerous, nor unhealthy. Exercise alone, without air, and without temperance, is not sufficient for the preservation of health; without following the fantastic modes of the Germans, young men, and old too, may take exercise by walking, riding, and rural employments, sufficient for every useful purpose; the wholesome operations of gardening are much to be preferred to any contortions of the body which Salzmann has recommended

p 128 P. 224. "*They bring no ideas.*" To prove that children have no ideas but what they gain by the senses, we see, that as their senses grow stronger their ideas increase; as, in fact, for the first few months, they can hardly hear, taste, smell, see or feel.

" 129 P. 230. "*Children are naturally dirty.*" The word naturally I use here for want of a better. That which we term nature, is no more than those first propensities which are common to all.

P. 235. "*So many amusing.*" The number of this sort of books is now so great, that we are again left to the difficulty of selecting. I should recommend those, for the first years of infancy, which are the most simple and intelligible; for a child should never read, without understanding every word completely. The lessons of Mrs. Barbauld by no means answer their title, for they contain both words and ideas far beyond the capacities of those for whom they are intended. I should recommend those of Miss Edgeworth or Mrs. Somerville in preference.

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P. 236. "*Intended.*" Lord Kaimes insists rather too strongly on the necessity of making praise the only reward for children. I do not deny that it ought to be generally applied; yet, from the mixed constitution of our nature, it cannot be adopted at all times. "If money, a fine coat, or what pleases the palate, be the reward promised, is it not the ready way to foment avarice, vanity, or luxury?"—P. 125. I agree that it is, if they are the *only* rewards proposed.

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P. 237. "*Ugly or deformed.*" Lord Kaimes says, "If a child have any defects in its shape, let the defect be acknowledged, and even joked with at times." I by no means agree to the latter part of the sentence.

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P. 238. "*The analogy.*" Art as well as nature shews the necessity of a leader or commander in all things; there must be a key-stone to an arch, as well as a leading branch to a tree.

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P. 239. "*The great object of education.*" One of the most sensible writers on education whom I have had the good fortune to meet with, is Lord Kaimes; next to Mr Locke's, his was the first practical Treatise ever publish-

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ed. His lordship, however, tho' he gives many excellent rules for the treatment of children, derived from experience, and a knowledge of human nature, yet, as he is strongly possessed with the old error of innate ideas, and natural dispositions, his maxims must be read and adopted with caution; he reasons sometimes inconsistently on this subject, because his prejudices and his judgment are at variance; the doctrine of innate propensities he takes for granted; yet, the rules he gives are such, as if he had no such ridiculous belief. "The human heart," says he, lies open to early instruction, and is susceptible of having proper notions imprinted on it, such as those of right or wrong, of praise or blame, of benevolence and selfishness, of yours and mine." *Vide Introduction, p. 3, to Hints on Education.*—Yet a little after, he says, "If the difference between truth and error be innate, which it surely is;" and immediately after,—"The period of infancy is short, every opportunity ought to be taken for instilling right notions, and making proper impressions."

135 P. 242, "Example." The most amiable, elegant, and persuasive poet of the present age, has expressed, in beautiful lines, the duty of a mother to instruct her children in benevolence.

Souvent à vos beinfaits joignez votre presence,
 Votre aspect consolant, doublera leur puissance,
 Menez y vos enfans; qu' ils viennent sans témoin
 Offrir leur don timide, au timide besoin;
 Que sur tout votre fille amenant sur vos traces
 La touchant pudeur la premier des grâces
 Comme un ange apparaisse à l' humble pauvreté
 Et fasse en rougissant l' essai de la bonté.

L' Homme des Champs. par Dellille
chant premier.

P. 244. "*Much depends.*" A few facts are worth a thousand arguments; and within the limits of my own experience, I hardly know any young persons educated at home (I do not mean merely kept at home), who were either profligate or unprincipled. 136

P. 246 "*A needy Parson.*" The following paragraph, from a newspaper called the *Globe*, 1805, will shew of what sort of stuff the masters and teachers of academies are composed.—"A swindler, of the following description, was indicted at the Middlesex sessions for defrauding the master of a coffee-house, in Oxford-street; he was found guilty, and sentenced to one year's imprisonment; and it was proved on the trial that his name was *Virgin*, that he was the son of a weaver at Taunton, that he had been a servant at Bath, after that a clerk to a banker, and being dismissed for ill behaviour, he went over to France, and on his return became assistant to an academy near London; he then opened a school at Hammersmith, the good-will of which he sold for a large sum of money; after that he became a curate at Hertinforbury, where he set up another academy. His associate in swindling, whose name was *Free*, was also proved to have been a teacher in many a celebrated seminary."—A wretch of the name of *Garner*, who lately lost his life in a notorious brothel, called the *Key*, was the master of an academy; these are but a few among many evidences which might be brought to prove the danger of committing children to mere advertising teachers, without further examination. Among the masters of private 137

academies there are no doubt many very worthy and able men, but I speak of the generality.

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P. 245⁶ "*Preserved.*" The author of the Secret Memoirs of Russia, in his chapter on Education, vol. 2, has given some account of the manner in which the children of the great families are educated in that country; he says, it has its advantages in Russia, tho' it is not applicable to any other nation.—"The great," says he, who are commonly too ignorant, or too much employed to undertake the education of their sons, confide them to the care of foreigners, who are generally Frenchmen, and place an implicit confidence in them, giving their pupils up to them to be formed in every respect by their care; and the tutors generally reward their generous reliance, by a sedulous attention to their pupils, in whom they endeavor to inspire the most elevated sentiments, and to give them a taste for every liberal study." Supposing that instead of choosing Frenchmen, our great people were to do the same to tutors of their own country, the advantages might be immense, for where a tutor takes an interest in the welfare of his pupil, he becomes a second father.

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P. 247. "*After this is over.*" A new grammar has lately been published by Mr Dalton, formed on the principles of Tooke's *Diversions of Purley*.

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P. 248. "*Visible to their senses.*" The greatest improvements which intellectual knowledge has experienced, within the two last centuries, are to be attributed to John Locke, and John Horne Tooke; the former overturned the doctrine of innate propensities, and the latter taught us that general terms are not signs of general ideas, but contrivances to avoid a multitude of useless names;

he has only, however, pursued the doctrine which the other first broached, and continued to refer all our ideas to the senses, as their primary and original source. Dr. Beddoes, in further attempting to banish the useless lumber of the schools, and to reduce every thing to the test of experiment, has proposed a method by which the truths of mathematics may become objects of sense, and Euclid taught, by palpable instead of imaginary figures.—The design is laudable, and if it should contribute to promote the advancement of actual above fancied knowledge, the Dr. may be considered as a benefactor of his species; for I heartily join with him in condemning the exclusive preference given to classical over scientific education, and wish to see the two united in the utmost possible degree, and for the best possible purpose. After having enforced the necessity of reducing mathematical demonstration to the evidence of the senses, he proposes “to construct a geometrical apparatus, which might be employed in the early part of education; for,” says he, “every thing we observe in children conspires to shew that nature intended us, during the first periods of life, to be chiefly employed in exercising them. The soul of a child may be said essentially to reside in its senses. At a riper age, the combination of these ideas engages a considerable share of attention, and at an advanced age, when the senses are blunted, the exercise of the internal faculties will still more occupy a mind previously well stored. As classical literature is not the whole, nor the most important part, of what ought to be taught in a good education, so even to acquire

this, some better method than that which we at present follow is wanting." The object of his book he professes to have been, to strengthen those arguments which hath been urged in favor of a system of education, which should pay some attention to the senses and the understanding.

Vide Demost. Evidence, p. 129.

141 P. 250. "*Banish deceit.*" Men are and always have been either bullied or cheated, and perhaps there is no other method by which they can be held together in society; these two words describe the two kinds of government, simple or mixed, to which all men are subject, tyrannies the first, monarchies and republics the second; and yet under both there is room for the exercise of great virtues among individuals. The Persians, who were not a commercial people, held truth in the greatest veneration, they detested nothing so much as a lie, and therefore they despised all people whom the practice of barter and exchange had rendered perfidious. When Cyrus received the Lacedæmonian ambassadors, he enquired what sort of people the Lacedæmonians were, and having heard, he gave them this answer—"I have no fear of men who have a place in the middle of their city where they meet together to cheat each other, if I live they shall suffer for it."

Hæc. lib. 1. c. 153.

142 P. 250. "*Tell a lie.*" *Gretry sur la verite* is a book which I recommend to my readers, as containing much good advice, tho' somewhat spoilt by an extravagant enthusiasm.

143 P. 253. "*Whoever wishes.*" On the danger of entrusting young people to servants. *in Vita de Alfieri, scritta da Esso* vol. i. p. 58.

P. 256. "*Those who are nursed.*" The illustrious Henry IVth of France, was born and educated in the rude province of Bearne; in his infancy he was dressed and fed like the children of the peasants; he lived among rocks and precipices, his food was brown bread and cheese, and his drink the pure stream; his head and feet were always bare, and he was a stranger to every species of indulgence.—Thomas, in his *Eloge de Sully*, attributes his strong and vigorous temper of mind, chiefly to his hardy education. "Luxury," says he, "by enfeebling the nerves destroys the principle of greatness, and makes the soul perish even before its birth." One man differs not much by nature from another man; but he is the best who has been brought up in adversity.

Thucydides, book i. p. 84.—Ed. Bipontii.

P. 259. "*The blighting.*" The beautiful sonnet of Petrarch addressed to a friend, who had abandoned literature for commerce, may be well applied to the present age—

Povera e nuda Filosofia

Dice la turba, al vil guadagno intesa.

Sonetta 7th.

P. 260. "*Liberty and the arts.*" Ideas similar to these may be found in the celebrated Treatise of Alfieri del Principe et delle Lettere.

P. 261. "*The religious principles of young men.*" Hay-
ing lately seen advertised a defence of public education by the master of Westminster school, and being particularly interested in every thing relating to the instruction of youth, I bought it with the hope of finding many new and strong arguments in favor of public over private education by so able an advocate; but great indeed was my disappoint-

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ment, when I found it contained little more than a foolish answer to a foolish attack about the number of prayers and collects that boys are forced to repeat in some of our great schools, which another learned Doctor had affirmed were totally omitted. The worthy head master positively maintains that the religious offices enjoined at Westminster amount to prayers (including the graces), ten times a day, of which none are omitted, except those at six o'clock in the morning. "The majority of the others is performed nine times every day, and the performance is enforced with as much *external decency* as can be expected, allowing for the natural impatience of boys under restraint, and the levity of youth." Added to these, are perpetual lectures, and religious exercises without number. Allowing all this to be true, can any thing tend more effectually to disgust young people with the very name of religion, can any thing more plainly account for the progress of infidelity? All that the Doctor says in its favor is, that it is in compliance with their statutes—statutes which were formed in times of religious bigotry and moral ignorance. Do not these things call powerfully for reform? or are our youth to be perpetually stunned with repetitions which can have no effect but to make them think religion a farce? It is not compelling boys to repeat creeds and commandments that will preserve them from vice and depravity.—On a subject of so trivial a nature, it is a pity two grave Doctors should differ so widely, and handle their weapons so roughly: they only give scandal to the church, and make sport for infidels. The learned master's defence of pagan learning does him credit as a scholar and a philosopher, and when his pen

is employed on subjects of such a nature, he seems to be acting in a manner worthy of his powerful talents; but to defend the mere repetition of collects, prayers and graces, without even pretending that they are of any utility, seems to be altogether unworthy of a man qualified to do justice to the higher topics of literature and morality.

P. 261. "*At first, therefore, let them.*" The folly of some parents with regard to their children, on the subject of religion, can only be accounted for by the force of custom and early prepossession. To teach a child to say its prayers before it can say its letters, is thoroughly ridiculous, yet not uncommon; let us at least wait till they understand what they are saying. In most other things we are content to stop for the expansion of reason; and religion is certainly not to be understood by inspiration, nor the only thing to be taught without being comprehended.

P. 262. "*Answer.*" The words of that great poet of antiquity whose works contain a rare union of imagination, good sense and morality, are exactly conformable to this idea.—*Vide Pind. Olymp. 2, 154 to 160*, to which I refer the learned.

P. 262. "*Analysis.*" Montesquieu sur le grandeur et decadence des Romanis, is a complete analysis of the whole Roman history; and he that reads that book may save himself the trouble of reading many others.

P. 268. "*Considerably compressed.*" Cicero quotes οὐδεν γλυκυτερον η παντ' υδνασι. *Epistole ad Atticum*, l. 14. 11. But Erasmus says,—"*Magna pars scientiæ est quædam nescire.*" v. *Epist.*

P. 269. "*Poetry.*" Mediocribus esse poetis, Non homines, non Di non concessere columnæ.

v. *Hor. A. P. l. 373.*

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The productions of nature are not all equally beautiful, neither are the productions of genius, but there is a point below which beauty is not to be found.—There are many beautiful poets who are not in the first rank of poetry.

153 P. 269. "*History*." "*Historia quoquo modo scripta delectat.*"

Plin. Epis. Lib. 5. 8.

154 P. 270. "*Such books*." The private lives of Princes are in general much more amusing than their public actions. Few books gives us a more disgusting picture of the interior of courts than the interesting memoirs of the Margravine of Bareith, from that book private persons may learn not to envy the great, and princes may learn to fear being thus exposed to posterity. On the mode in which young people should read history, see some excellent hints in Wyttenbach's *Vita Rupnkenii*, p. 99. to 107.

155 P. 273. "*Rapin*." I have mentioned this valuable historian only as being unfit for young persons.

156 P. 279. "*By design*." The learned Adam Smith says, that private education being the institution of nature, and public education the contrivance of man, it is easy to determine which is the wisest.

Vide Theory of Moral Sentiments, vol. ii. p. 78.

The reason here given for preferring private to public education, is by no means a good one, nor sufficient to satisfy any man of sense ; it is as much as to say, that nature is in all things to be preferred to art, and that man can make no improvements in the works of nature ; a position contradicted by every day's experience ;—almost the whole of society is artificial.

157 P. 280. "*One profession*." The old poets, who are no bad philosophers, are full of allusions to that rigid

necessity which is the cause of so many evils in the world; and Hesiod, describing the two kinds of contention which the gods have given to men, has these remarkable words:—

Οὐτὶς τήν γε φίλῃ βροτὸς ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἀνάγκῃ
Ἀθανάτων βούλησιν ἔστι τιμῶσι βροτῶν

Ἔργα καὶ ἤμεραι.—L. 15.

His pious editor, Dr Robinson, fearful of making God the author of evil, attempts to explain away his meaning; it remains, however, as before; and, by literally translating his words, it is,—

“War and discord, so fatal to mankind, are produced by the one.”

“No one loves this species of contention, yet by the counsels of the immortals, and by the law of necessity, men cultivate it tho’ heavy and oppressive.”

It is natural for a man, suffering under the weight of calamity, to console himself with the idea of future happiness, either in this world or another; hence have arisen the notions of immortality, common to all ages; hence also comes the Christian notion of a millenium; and hence the philosophical dream, of a state of perpetual peace and tranquillity—an imaginary prospect which no age will ever see.

P. 282. “*Our Universities must.*” A sermon has lately been published by Dr. Parr, with copious notes, many of which, like the flourishes of modern music, have little to do with the original subject; in these, the Doctor has discussed pretty much at length, the utility and excellence of our Universities, and endeavored to defend them against the attacks of Mr Gibbon and others.—

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With how great success, it is by no means foreign to my purpose to examine. The singularities of his stile I will leave to the just reprehension of the critics, and meddle with nothing more than his arguments. He professes to desire that the Universities should be judged by their fruits, and in this I will not oppose him, yet, as he has noticed only the choicest of those fruits, I will speak of the whole, for out of the tens of thousands who have been educated at Oxford and Cambridge for the last forty years, he selects about fifty, whose proficiency in virtue and learning he considers to be a sufficient proof of the excellence of these institutions: His list, if it was meant to honor only those who have been eminently distinguished, is too large; if he intended to mention every member of the two Universities who deserved to be considered a gentleman and a scholar, it is too small, for hundreds have merited his notice on this account, in addition to those whom he has mentioned, tho' unknown to the world either by their conduct or their writings.— It is by no means fair to decide on the merits of any place of education from the few who have done it credit, compared with the numbers who have either been ruined or never heard of; because the excellence of any institution depends on its general effects, not upon a few examples selected by prejudice or partiality. The Doctor does not consider how many, lost in the gulph of indolence or pleasure, have perished nameless and forgotten; of these he takes no account, but pompously enumerates a few who have the name of scholars, which is by no means a proof either of public or private worth.

Tho' I am willing and desirous to bear testimony to

the excellent intention and many advantages of these seminaries, I will by no means agree with Dr. Parr, that all is right, because, in the course of a three weeks visit to Cambridge or Oxford, he was indulged with literary conversation in a few combination rooms, or handsomely entertained by many masters of colleges. Dr. Parr resided at Cambridge as an under graduate for nearly three years, and during that time he was not remarkable in his expressions of reverence for the attainments of his superiors. Since that time, he has frequently been there as a visitor, and his great literary reputation having always insured him respect, he has returned it copiously with praise; but he is, nevertheless little qualified to judge of the internal regulations of a place where he has been conversant only with a few of its members, and those selected for their learning and talents. I resided in the University of Cambridge for many years, and have examined it in all its stages; I have seen all the springs which move the machine, and found some of them rusty, and some out of repair, yet, with all my consciousness of its defects, I am sensible that, when properly adjusted, it is capable of producing the most extensive advantages, and, so far from wishing to speak of it with disrespect for the faults of some of its members, or for those failings which are the inevitable consequence of great antiquity, I will never cease to think with gratitude of the time spent under its venerable shade; of the many pleasant acquaintances which I formed during a residence of near seventeen years, and of the many helps and inducements to study which were afforded me, by its tranquil serenity, its copious libraries,

and literary converse. Yet I will not give to *Alma Mater* all the credit of those who have done her honor, for they mostly went there well provided with a disposition for knowledge, and well fortified against the dangers of youthful vices, or, like many others, they might have perished, unknown and unlamented ; for I have seen such instances of the power of temptation, and the neglect of tutors, that I am thoroughly convinced that nothing but previous good habits and much resolution can support a young man in his studies, or preserve him against vice and indolence. On the other hand, I will acknowledge that the whole fault is not to be imputed to the Universities, for such is the dissipation of the age, that young men frequently come there complete proficient in vice and debauchery ; but it certainly is the fault of those who have the government of colleges, that others who enter them, comparatively pure, should suffer from the ill effects of company and example. Let them send away all those who are notoriously debauched, however great their rank and fortune ; let them compel them to give up their horses, their servants, and their carriages, or go themselves. No ; this will not answer the purpose of masters and tutors, whose hopes of preferment are generally attached to young men of rank and family.—While the Church is connected with the State, and the Universities are governed by the Church, it will never be otherwise. Dr. Parr has met with some instances of young men of great talents who have been honored with University distinctions, and he hastily concludes that the whole system of education is good ; but this is a false inference. I do not expect all to be learned, nor all vir-

tuons ; yet ignorance and profligacy may be banished, and many errors reformed. Let tutors examine minutely into the conduct of their pupils, not with the cold severity of superiors, but with the honest warmth of friends ; let them lay aside all distance and reserve ; let them meet and converse freely with all ranks ; let them consider themselves answerable for their conduct, and they will then be careful to know how they employ their time ; for a man who undertakes the instruction of youth, cannot always be his own master ; he must devote many hours in the day to his pupils ; he must wink at some things, if they are not gross ; he must not be extreme to mark offences ; he must advise, rather than command, and seem to take an interest in all that relates to the young man's welfare, and if, after that, he does not succeed in making him both wise and good, he will be more than commonly unfortunate. The remarks of Mr Gray, tho' sometimes caustic and severe, are generally well grounded ; but the pedantry of Dr. Parr, in bringing forward a list of great names, many of whom have done very little to the general advancement of virtue and happiness, is not to be supported. What does it prove of the general excellence of the place, that Snape, Taylor, and Waterland, were of Cambridge ? and what could Lord North know of the internal state of Oxford ? Just as much as the Duke of Grafton did of Cambridge. I detest this childish appeal to great men ; it degrades the dignity of learning, and lessens the respect due to talents ; it shews the consciousness of a bad cause, or a great want of argument. To what purpose is it to boast of his friendship with Dr. Routh, to prove that the college of

Magdalen is well administered? The most learned men are not always the best masters of colleges. The pedantry, and, I will affirm, the weakness, of appealing to Isaac Causabon, in answer to Lord Sheffield's accusation of the expences of an University, tho' they will not contribute one atom towards conviction, may excite a smile of pity or contempt. To the testimony of Dr. Parr, in favor of masters and tutors of colleges, against another charge of Lord Sheffield's I will state positively that he is egregiously mistaken, and further, that he has few opportunities of being acquainted with the fact; but, even during his short stay at Cambridge, he must have been blind indeed, if he has not remarked the extravagant respect which is paid to men of fortune, and the eagerness with which they are sought for by the different colleges. I have seen the venerable rulers of these seats of learning as jealous of each other, when a nobleman was in the case, as a set of beaux about a celebrated beauty. The foolish distinction of ranks and studies is degrading to learning, and subversive of morality; a fellow commoner may miss lectures and chapel with impunity, when a pensioner or sizer is punished.

The lectures of different professors, and Bodleian catalogue, in two volumes folio, are next brought forward by the Doctor, as a proof of the advanced state of learning, and the general excellence of University studies. We are then entertained with a long panegyric on the examinations, competitions, and emulation of young men at Cambridge, and their progress in all learning and science, which might be very fine, if it were all true, or applied to one tenth of the students, but Dr. Parr ought to

know, that young men may be as idle as they please, if they do not please to be otherwise, and that even those who obtain literary distinctions do not always deserve them, for there is much of intrigue and management in all public examinations. Is it reasonable to suppose that a lecture of an hour in a day, which generally consists of nothing more than one of the students construing a classic, and hearing a few grammatical remarks, can improve a young man either in classical or any other knowledge? Even supposing these lectures, as they are called, to consist of the most elegant and learned explanation of an author, is that all that is required of a tutor? Should he not endeavor to give his pupils enlarged and liberal ideas of history, morality, poetry, oratory, criticism, the principles of the laws of nations and the elements of our own laws? Ought there not to be also lectures given *gratis* by professors, on chemistry, practically applied, and on every branch of knowledge which relates to the happiness and comfort of society? Certainly this ought to be so, and yet it is certain that it is not so. How then are we to consider these places as adapted to the great purposes of social and civil life, to the advancement of knowledge, or the extension of truth and liberality!—How can minute and verbal criticisms on classical authors enlarge the mind or expand the heart, or what connection have pure mathematics with politics or morality, the great objects of education? No mere mathematician is either wiser or better than other men.

Till the funds which have been appropriated for the benevolent purposes of public instruction are more properly applied, till the Universities cease to be connected with the

Church, till some method can be devised to excite the zeal of tutors for the interest of their pupils, the Universities will never be what they ought to be—the seats of knowledge and guardians of integrity.

Tho' those institutions were at first formed with excellent intentions, yet they shew, both in their original statutes and subsequent management, little knowledge of human nature. Punishments, formerly degrading and severe, and now trifling and ridiculous, are the only means of amendment employed; and rewards, which are so few, compared to the number of competitors, as to damp the ardor of exertion, produce but little industry among young students, who are less ready to find motives for application than excuses for indolence.—The account which Dr. Parr has given of these seminaries is like the narratives of certain travellers, who pretend to acquire an idea of the manners and character of a people by hurrying through the post towns, and being introduced to two or three individuals in the country: they both glide over the surface of things, and then think themselves qualified to judge of the substance of the elements of which the body is composed; yet it requires an intimate knowledge of both, to speak with any certainty or truth of their different merits and qualities. I vaunt not of superior knowledge, but superior opportunities. I have lived in the University with the young and the old, with the learned and the unlearned, with the virtuous and the vicious. I have remarked the temptations, propensities, and dispositions of the young, and seen how much they suffer from the solicitation and example of their equals, and the negligence and indifference of their elders.

I have seen young men, by being suddenly removed from one sort of society to another, become sober, diligent, and steady, or profligate, thoughtless, intemperate, debauched, and unprincipled; and all this without any knowledge or interference of their superiors.—I have seen the modest, well disposed youth, fresh from the purity of a country school, resist for months every temptation to vice, and withstand every attack, but that of ridicule; in such a case, he might have been preserved by the interference of a tutor, to recommend him to proper society; for I am certain how much depends on young men having tutors or companions a little older than themselves; neither severe nor profligate, but lively, temperate, and studious. Instead of this, their tutors and masters are too far removed from them, both by age and dignity, and the young men are left entirely to themselves and to the company of each other, without any other restraint or admonition than a trifling punishment, which they either laugh at or evade, and if they take care not to offend grossly, they may be as idle and debauched as they please, for, in many colleges, a Latin theme once a week is the only literary exercise required, and chapel twice a day the only religious duty, and for these, all offences may be commuted or pardoned.—It is not perhaps now the time to say what might be done to render our two Universities better suited to their original purpose; yet it is certainly allowable to say what they are not, for, after all, the question of their merits must be decided, not by pedantry and pompous words, but by common sense, by facts, and by experience.

P. 282. "*The education.*" The education of women

in this country was at one period too learned; it was then again neglected, and in general very limited and illiberal. The learned languages, tho' by no means indispensibly requisite, are certainly a desirable acquisition: yet such a degree of information as may enlarge the mind, by preventing early prejudices, and implanting liberal ideas, is positively required in every young woman above the condition of poverty. The daughters of Sir Thomas More were among the earliest examples of learned women. Erasmus tells us, in one of his epistles, that his acquaintance with them removed his prejudices against female improvement. "*Jam neminem fere mortalium non habebat hæc persuasio, sexui feminino literas et ad castitatem et ad famam esse inutiles. Nec ipse quondam prorsus abhorruì ab hac sententia, verum hanc mihi Morus penitus excussit animo. Nulla res sic totum puellæ pectus occupat quam studiam. Multis simplicitas et rerum inscitia pudicitiz jacturam attulit. Neque video cur maritis sit metuendum ne minus habeant morigeras si doctas habeant. Imo mea sententiâ nil intractabilius est inscitia. Certé hoc præstat animus culturâ studiorum exercitatus, ut intelligat æquas probasque rationes, videatque quid deceat, quid expediat. Ad hæc quem jucunditas, firmitasque conjugii magis ab animorum benevolentia quam corporum amore proficiatur, multo tencioribus vinculis junguntur quos ingeniorum quoque charitas copulat, magisque veretur maritum uxor, quem agnoscit et præceptorem.*" *Erasmi. Epist. ed. fol. p. 760.*—The whole of this epistle deserves to be perused.—Yet learning, without good sense, is a dangerous acquirement, and they who wish their daughters to have the one, should not forget the other; a learned

woman frequently neglects her family, a sensible one very seldom.

P. 287. "*Boarding schools are.*" The prevalence of boarding-school education is a proof of the luxury and dissipation of the age; for parents who are constantly engaged in visiting and amusements, can have little time to attend to their children, and, therefore, rather than leave them to servants, send them to a boarding-school, which, of two evils, is certainly the least; tho' in some cases, I believe young people may stand a better chance of being properly educated there than at home; for where the conductors of these schools have sense enough to discover that it is for their interest to do justice to their pupils, and where they do not take too many, it is certainly a resource by no means to be despised, tho' never to be preferred to the advantages of parental education, when that can be obtained with its requisite excellence.

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NOTES

To the Essay on the British Constitution.

216/ P. 289. "*The Germans.*" For the origin of the British Constitution, see Gilbert Stuart's Enquiry.

217 P. 290. "*The representation.*" V. debates at the Revólution, on the word *Abdicated*—Cobbet's debates, vol. v. p. 40. "Our government is mixed, not monarchical or tyrannous, and had its beginning from the people."—Speech of Serjeant Maynard.—"It is by the people's consent we make laws."—Speech of Serjeant Treby.—"When a king breaks the laws he ceases to be a king." King James Ist's speech 16 7. The constitution of the government is grounded upon compact and covenant with the people, Sir R. Howard's speech, v. Cobb. v. 5. In these debates it is manifest how much the boldest speakers feared to pronounce that the King had forfeited the crown by his acts of tyranny and violation of the constitution. They were unwilling to sanction the doctrine, that Kings may be punished for their misdeeds, like other men.

218 P. 292. "*To preserve.*" The benefits of the British Constitution were not obtained, and cannot be preserved without many sacrifices. The Hampdens, Marvels and Sidneys of former times have lived in vain, if we their descendants, either thro' fear or interest, basely sur-

render the blessings they have obtained for us. To such men is the world indebted for all that it now enjoys of liberty, virtue and happiness, for had they not given up their lives and comfort, and patiently endured the persecution of tyrants, darkness would have overspread the face of the earth, and the moral world been "without form or comeliness." To those purer souls who, refined from the gross feelings of interest or servility, have written, fought and suffered for their country, it is owing that the glorious flame of liberty has been kept alive on the earth, and the mass of society preserved from corruption and rottenness, for without liberty every other gift of heaven is dull and spiritless. What are knowledge, wealth, and talents, without the power to use them freely? What are friends and honors without secure enjoyment? What is even life without liberty? To those then who have surrendered their quiet and comfort to secure this inestimable blessing to their own age and to posterity, the world is indebted as its best benefactors, and tho' they suffered severely by the sacrifices they made of ease and comfort, yet they had pleasures which the sordid sons of corruption can never feel, they had pleasures which men of common clay can never taste, they had their reward in the pure and animated enjoyment of having done a service to the world, which no narrow considerations of private interest can ever equal, and narrow souls can never comprehend.— Let us then erect statues to the memory of those illustrious patriots who have sustained the cause of civil and religious liberty, by their pen, their sword, or their purse. Yet should public gratitude fail to honor them with due



esteem, their memory will still live in the breast of every honest man, who prizes his liberty more than his existence.

164 P. 293. "*Equal representation.*" The representation first began to be unequal in the time of Elizabeth, by many towns falling to decay which had formerly possessed considerable opulence, and since then other towns have risen to great consequence which were not originally thought worthy of representatives.—For further information on this subject, see Cobbett's Parliamentary Register, vol. i. p. 749. and Flower's Political Review, vol. viii. p. 254.

165 P. 294. "*Liberty of the press.*" While the power of the Attorney General to file informations ex officio, and the doctrine of truth being a libel, remain in force, the liberty of the press rests not on right but on permission.

166 P. 294. "*Constitution and law.*" Vide Cartwright's Appeal, p. 13. The passage he quotes from Lord Abingdon's pamphlet has not however given the distinction its full force, because his lordship forgot that many valuable parts of the constitution are to be found in acts of Parliament.

Blackstone has not sufficiently attended to the distinction between political and civil liberty, tho' no two things can be more distinct. The one means the share which the people have in the government, the other the protection they derive from it, without the former there is no security for the latter.

- 167 P. 298. "*It is not meant in this short treatise.*" A diligent perusal of our monkish historians, and of our early law writers, is requisite for acquiring an accurate knowledge of the constitution.

NOTES

To the Essay on Political Economy.

P. 296. "*Happiness is the end.*" That the good of the whole is the object of government was a maxim acknowledged by all political writers in the free states of antiquity, yet never practically applied to the lower ranks. So far as it related to them, it rested merely in theory; their liberty was a vain shew, which consisted only in tumult and noise; and the idea of having a share in the government seemed to compensate for the want of all the substantial blessings of society. Xenophon describes them as in the lowest state of degradation; "In every country," says he, "the better sort of people are the enemies of the democracy, or lower ranks, for in the former there is the least intemperance and iniquity, but in the latter there is ignorance, disorder, and iniquity; their poverty drives them to every thing that is base, and their ignorance is the consequence of their poverty." *Vide Libellus de Repub. Ath. in the Opuscula Politica, ed. Zeunii.* The whole of this chapter is filled with expressions of contempt towards the lower ranks. The great *desideratum* in politics is to civilize the mob.

P. 300. "*Has a right to expect from.*" Le peuple est admirable pour choisir ceux à qui il doit confier quel-

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que partie de son autorité. Comme la plupart des citoyens, qui ont assez de suffisance pour elire, n'en ont pas assez pour être élus, de même le peuple qui a assez de capacite pour se faire rendre compte de la gestion des autres, n'est pas propre a gerer par lui même.

Montesquieu, lib. 2, cap. 2.

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P. 305. "*He listened.*" The greater part of these insinuations were listened to by the monarch with heedless credulity, and he was on the point of stopping the virtuous progress of the only man qualified to save himself and the nation from utter ruin. The courtiers represented Sully as unequal to the task he had undertaken, and vaunted of their own superficial knowledge in a jargon, which was intelligible only to themselves.—*Vide Memoires, French edit. 4to. p. 450.* But when they found that argument was of no longer avail, they resorted to calumny, and invented stories to the disgrace of Sully, which were indeed too gross to deceive the most credulous. One of the stories was, that he had seized upon, and constantly carried about with him as prisoners, those discarded speculators who had ruined the nation; the king, however, gave credit to the rumor, and on his first meeting with Sully afterwards, received him with coldness and distance; but at the same time taxed him with his supposed cruelty, and called on him to explain his conduct. The surprise of the minister, on so ridiculous an accusation, was a sufficient proof to the king that he was innocent, and the whole had the effect of overwhelming his enemies with disgrace, and placing him irrevocably in the king's favor, thereby affording a strong instance how far truth and honesty will prevail over in-

trigue and deceit. The coffers of the king were empty, the country was impoverished, and every thing was in a manner to begin afresh; yet Sully, by his prudence and œconomy, in a few years, caused every thing to revive and flourish. P. 484. He forbad the manufacture of gold and silver stuffs, and every article of luxury. This, perhaps, was an excess of œconomy, but the means which he took to stop the accumulation of money in the hands of public peculators, and his reflections on that species of wealth, deserve to be remembered in all ages, and at all times. "Nothing," says he, "has contributed so much to pervert among us the idea of probity, simplicity, and independence, and to bring those virtues into contempt; nothing has more strongly fortified that unfortunate propensity to effeminacy and luxury so common among men; nothing has so much degraded the ancient French nobility, as those rapid and brilliant fortunes amassed by farmers of the revenue, and other public plunderers, by the opinion which they have propagated, that money is the only road to honor and dignity, and that with money every thing may be forgotten and forgiven."—*Vide p. 67, vol. ii.* The means which he took to suppress duelling were perhaps too violent for the times in which he lived. The practice is founded on mistaken notions of honor, which, at a time when mankind had few better principles to direct them, (tho' it cannot be defended on the principles of justice and reason,) may at least be pardoned, as having tended to promote civilization, and preserve the weak from the rudeness and insults of the strong. P. 149.

P. 305. "*But time and perseverance.*" For an account

of Sully's life and conduct, I refer to his interesting memoirs, and to his panegyric, by the French philosopher, Thomas.

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P. 305. "*Frugality and æconomy.*" The love of pleasure and the love of power are the two most forcible motives of human action; in the present state of society, money is power, and, therefore, the pursuit of money, by those who have it not, is both natural and justifiable, and the pursuit of pleasure, by those who have it, is equally blameless, provided their pleasures be moderate, rational, and beneficent: nothing but stoicism, or romantic ignorance, can deny the truth of these positions. Money is the most powerful incentive to industry, and without it no state can subsist; whoever, therefore, condemns the moderate pursuit of gain, or affects to despise money, as beneath his notice, shews his extreme ignorance of the principles of human nature, and will probably suffer for it, by contempt and poverty. As money is the representative of wealth, so paper is the representative of money, and a poor one it is; yet such is the force of custom, that it is now almost of equal value with the reality. For my own part, I almost blush for shame when I offer a man a piece of dirty paper as the price of his labor or ingenuity; and yet money, whatever form it may take, is the great cement of society; it binds the whole together, tho' it sets individuals at variance.

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P. 308. "*Richlieu.*" This minister, whose whole life was a scene of intrigue, of artifice, and cruelty, set out in the world with a lie, for in order to be consecrated a bishop by Paul V. he pretended he was twenty-four years of age, when he was only twenty-two. He was

a man of extensive talents, of the most profound subtlety, and the most complete profligacy of principle. His intrigues tended in some degree to the aggrandisement of his country, and that single circumstance has, with many people, been sufficient to atone for all his faults and vices; yet he was a tissue of every thing that was base and contemptible. Cruel, revengeful, suspicious, implacable, artful, and ostentatious; he squandered the treasures of the nation to gratify his own vanity, and heaped together immense wealth, which, to satisfy his conscience, he left to the king. The people were nothing with him; himself and the court were every thing. The particulars of his administration present too horrid a picture of human nature, in the extremes of oppressors and oppressed, to be considered with complacency; and it were well if a veil could be for ever thrown over such history, which affords neither instruction nor amusement, and can only excite pity and contempt. For a further account of this artful intriguer, see Hume's History of England, *vol. vi. p. 232.*

P. 308. "*Mazarin.*" The character of this man was in some degree opposite to that of his predecessor, for, tho' a subtle politician, he had more boldness, more openness, and more dignity; yet, their schemes of policy were the same, tho' their means were different: To humble the nobles and the people, and to exalt the power of the crown, as the means of exalting themselves, were their great objects. Under the authority of Mazarin, the internal administration was more shamefully neglected, tho' the power of Austria was more completely humbled; his own coffers were filled, while those of

the treasury and the people were emptied; justice, commerce, arts, science, and learning, withered under his blighting power. The military glory of France was raised to a high pitch of renown, but her internal prosperity was ruined; the education of the young monarch was neglected, and most of the vices of Louis XIV. are to be attributed to the example and the vile policy of this profligate and ambitious minister. More grossly avaricious than Richlieu, he had heaped up treasures too enormous even for the royal coffers, and he maintained a degree of shew and splendor, beyond even royal magnificence. His princely air and manner continued with him to the last, and it is even said, that to keep up the appearance of health, in the languor of disease, and to deceive those who might expect his death, when he gave his last public audience, he put rouge upon his face, and assumed a degree of spirit in his air and gait, which was indeed but ill counterfeited; for the Spanish ambassador turned round to some one near him and remarked, that it was a pretty good likeness of the cardinal, tho' not quite so spirited as the original. His conscience smote him on his death bed, and by the advice of his confessor, he bequeathed all his treasures to the king. Alas! he had nothing to bequeath to the people for the loss of their liberty and comfort.

17 P. 311. "*Montesquieu*." His faults and his excellencies have been ably estimated by the once celebrated Bertrand Barrere.

The merits of his remarks on the different principles of different forms of government, have been acutely examined by Helvetius, by Mr Henry Redhead Yorke, in



his Mural Nights, p. 19. &c. and by the Count Alfieri, in his celebrated book Della Tirannide, p. 24.

One of the few chapters in which Montesquieu had chosen to censure present evils, is that in which he treats of the effect of punishments, *lib.* 6. *cap.* 12. And in another place where, according to his general principle, he was going to justify the use of torture in despotic states; but he makes a long pause, and exclaims,—“But I hear the voice of nature cry out against me!” *cap.* 17. The books of Montesquieu, which more particularly relate to political œconomy, are the 13th, 20th, 21st, 22d, and 23d.

P. 313. “*The œconomists.*” The system of the œconomists has met with an able defender in the illustrious Dugald Stewart, and whoever wishes to think well of them, must apply to his defence of their motives and principles. I doubt he has spoken of them too favorably, yet he has spoken with moderation. 176

To such of my readers as are unacquainted with the writings of this amiable philosopher, and have any taste for moral and intellectual researches, I recommend an immediate perusal of mild, calm, candid, liberal, and enlightened disquisitions. He does not rest merely in speculative systems and opinions, but lays down principles deduced from long experience and profound meditation, tending at the same time, by natural inference, to moral, social, and political melioration; yet these things are not introduced with the fiery zeal of a reformer, but with the sober dignity of philosophical enquiry. They are not addressed to the multitude, but to those by whom the multitude must be enlightened. Tho’ I admire his phi-

losophy, I dissent from his metaphysics, for they tend to revive the doctrines which Mr Locke so happily exploded.

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P. 324. "*He therefore.*" When Adam Smith wrote the following passage, he never imagined what was to happen in the year 1800.—"And from what has been said, it seems evident enough, that corn can at no price be so engrossed by the inland dealers as to hurt the people."—*Vol. ii. p. 307.*

The great increase of paper money in this country (caused by the necessities of government, and the exportation of specie), has had an evident tendency to raise the price of provisions, and to favor the schemes of monopolists. It becomes the duty of government, as instituted for the good of the people, to lay restraints on such speculations, and take every means in their power to bring back the capital of the country to that sober and regular employment of its strength, which might tend to the moderate advantage of individuals, without depressing the middle ranks of the community. Instead of this, however, government have hitherto seemed rather to favor the tendency which the state of the circulating medium (occasioned by the late war), has had, to the aggrandisement of a few at the expence of the many; for we hear of nothing now but great merchants, great farmers, and great fortunes in every trade, while the poor and middle ranks are oppressed by those enormous prices, which tend to make others great at their expence.

Since the above was written, the situation of England is almost wholly changed. She is about to be brought down to her true rank and level in the scale of nations.

She has descended from the proud pre-eminence which she has so long enjoyed by the folly and weakness of other nations, and it will require no small portion of political wisdom, and no small skill in political œconomy to enable her to maintain the station even of a secondary power. To this state she has been brought by the imprudent interference of Mr Pitt in the French revolution.

P. 326. "*Dictionary*." An Italian is now publishing, at Milan, a collection of all the writers of his own country, on political œconomy, enriched with judicious notes and observations; the work will comprehend about thirty volumes, in octavo, and probably be some time before it is completed. 178

P. 327. "*Malthus*." The Edinburgh Reviewers, who profess to criticise every work of importance; of which importance they create themselves the sole judges, have most unaccountably never yet noticed Mr Matthus' book on Population, a work whose moral and political importance exceeds, in my opinion, that of any other, of the last or present century. These gentlemen are very fluent writers, but on most subjects very superficial thinkers, and I am sorry to find on that account that they are able to make so great an impression on the public opinion; for if there is any sort of men whose influence is more to be dreaded in a state than that of any other, it is those who have acquired a habit of talking and writing upon any subject without any profundity of thought; such men can lead the multitude wherever they please, for the multitude never trouble themselves with thinking, but they like fine words and fine sentences; 179



they like to have their ears tickled, and they like the men who can tickle them, and such men are the Edinburgh Reviewers, they can gloss and varnish over any subject, and make the worse appear the better reason, but they have never penetrated deeply into the nature of things, and yet they have bandied and tossed about all authors, and all subjects of importance, except Malthus on Population. That they have never ventured to fathom, for it is a subject on which words alone are not sufficient, they dare not attempt it in all its bearings and relations, therefore they have with proper prudence left it untouched. Men who think much and write little are most likely to write well on the subjects they undertake to handle, while they who write on all subjects can seldom think deeply upon any, and if they can but acquire a fluency of words, and a certain novelty of arrangement, which goes a great way with the multitude, they think themselves qualified for any literary undertaking, however arduous or extensive; these are the men whom my soul abhors—

ὡμῶς αἰδᾶται πύλινσσι

HOMER.

because they are always arrogant in proportion to their emptiness, and impose upon the world both in writing and conversation by the mere force of well sounding and well arranged words, and treat with contempt all others who do not possess the same talent. With so little honesty do these gentlemen exercise their critical functions, that their praise is censure, and their censure is praise. For wit and humor they have no doubt some talent, but their stile is flippant and their reasoning superficial.—

The best authors have felt the lash of their satire oftener than the worst, because they were not qualified to appreciate their merits, and there is little reliance to be had on their judgment, as it is generally influenced either by private or party motives.

P. 329. "*Ten thousand.*" By waste I mean, when that which is raised for human sustenance is thrown away, without ever being applied to that purpose. In every man of war of 64 guns, the actual waste, according to this definition, is said to amount to one-eighth of the whole provision bought for the ship's company; in every great family it is somewhat greater, and in every great inn not less. Whoever wishes to have an idea of waste, must walk the streets of London before nine o'clock in the morning, and he will see that what was raised to feed human beings, goes to feed beasts; it may be said that these beasts in return become human food—but by œconomy all that filthy process might have been saved, and more human beings fed.

P. 331. "*Wretched.*" No man who will take the trouble to look a little about him, and to visit the dwellings of the poor, will deny that, in many situations, the produce of their labor is insufficient to enable them to procure food and clothing for their families, and that the pittance of parish relief is totally inadequate to provide them with comforts when they are sick or infirm. Their food (at least of such as cannot earn great wages), is poor and meagre, affording them little nourishment. Meat is seldom within their reach, and tea is the general substitute for more wholesome viands. Sound healthy beer or ale they never taste; but a poor, nasty, watery composition

which goes by these names, tho' composed of any thing but malt and hops—for in this age of dearness and inequality, every thing that can be adulterated, is adulterated; and whence does it arise, but from the excessive earnestness of all men to be rich, even at the expence of the poor, and from the excessive respect which is paid to riches above every good quality. Tho' it will be said, that much has been done to alleviate the sufferings of the poor, yet still it must be answered, that all these things are only palliatives, affording merely temporary relief, and that they go not to the root of the evil, which exists in the disposition of the higher ranks to depress the poor, and to keep them in a state of servility and dependence; dependent certainly they ought to be, but dependent only on their labor, the price of which should always bear a just proportion to the price of provisions, for all other schemes of providing for their wants are altogether inconsistent with the principles of good government or sound political oeconomy. I like not the watery substitutes for wholesome food, which were invented by Count Rumford, and patronized with insulting benevolence by the wealthy of all ranks. They might be sufficient to keep body and soul together, but they were a poor reward for constant labor, and patient self-denial. The lower ranks, however, are everlastingly indebted to the worthy Count, who not only invented for them the cheapest food, but by wonderful ingenuity taught them how to eat it, and found out that nourishment depends not only on the quantity of meat, but on the time that is taken in eating it, and on the pleasure a man *fancies* he receives.—*Vide Essays Economical, &c. Vol. i. p. 206. 207.*

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MATERIALS
FOR
THINKING.

THE STATE OF SOCIETY,
*And the Improvements of which it is capable,
impartially considered.*

THE life of man ⁽¹⁾ is so full of calamities, and exposed to so many more, that happiness, tho' constantly his aim, seems never intended to be his lot. The sources of misery are many and various; some men find them within themselves, and others in the objects which surround them, and few, even of the dullest minds, are at all times exempt from uneasiness. Gaiety and apathy of temper preserve many from suffering, and in a world where pain is so much more frequent than pleasure, they are not to be pitied; but they are most

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The State of Society

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to be envied, who, by the constant exercise of their reason, have learned to make a just estimate of life, and, in all their distresses, can philosophically exclaim, "Such is the condition of mortality!" To arrive at this desirable state of mind, it is requisite to have had much experience of the world, and to have coolly reflected on the nature and constitution of things. Without such reflection, no man of sense, or sensibility, can patiently endure the evils he must inevitably suffer, and see others suffer, in the world. Hence naturally arises the question on the origin of evil, whether it is inherent in the constitution of nature, or capable of being removed by reason and philosophy. To me it appears that there is a radical defect in the system² which can never be wholly amended, tho' it may be somewhat lessened. How or from whence that defect has arisen I pretend not to understand, tho' it cannot be denied that the disproportion which exists between the increase of population and the means of subsistence, is the primary cause of evil from which most of our calamities are derived, and to which all the other evils of the world are subservient as ministering agents. This too is the limit which nature has placed to the happiness of man,—a limit which he

on the
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of evil

Disproporⁿ
between
population
& subsist^{ce}
cause

/2/ vide note 453

can never transgress, tho' he may do much to improve his condition.

Had the earth possessed a productive power, equal to the supply of an unlimited population, the first cause of contention among mankind would have been considerably diminished; but the contrary fact being fully proved, and the love of life being the first and most active principle in human nature, the love of power, (which is only the same principle in excess or a desire to possess the greatest portion of the means of living, and to control the exertions of other men), is the visible cause of those miseries and contentions which have hitherto kept the world in commotion. But tho' these propensities are almost instinctive in man, they are not like the instincts of the lion and the eagle, incapable of control, for being also endowed with a nobler principle, which is that of reason, he is rendered capable of diminishing the force of a propensity, which, tho' implanted in him for the preservation of his existence, if suffered to operate unrestrained, tends to more of evil than is requisite for that purpose, and would render the world a scene of destruction and misery, even greater than it is at present. The evils of the passions, ambition, envy, pride, malice, and hatred, which

The Love of power, the 2^d Cause of human misery

on the state of society

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are the cause of contention and tyranny, have their origin in the source already mentioned. The evils of nature, such as the inclemency of the seasons, the force of the elements, and the frequency of disease, seem to answer the same purpose, viz. to lessen the numbers of mankind, and to shorten their existence, in order to keep down population to a level with the means of subsistence.

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*The primary
cause
explained*

Having stated the difference between the productive powers of the earth and of man, to be the primary cause of the evils that are in the world, it is requisite for me to develop this principle somewhat more fully, and to shew, that as it exists in the constitution of nature, a considerable portion of evil must ever continue to be the lot of mankind, notwithstanding their utmost endeavors to improve their condition. This principle is the great wheel which moves the whole machinery of society, and it ought never to be lost sight of in any topic of moral or political enquiry; for tho' it may perhaps border upon the ridiculous when applied to some of its ultimate results, yet it is nevertheless the remote cause even of the most trifling events of the world. All schemes of moral reformation or political œconomy, which are formed without a due regard to the principle of population,

must end in frustration and disappointment. Supposing the judgment, science, and benevolence of the statesman, the economist, and the philanthropist, to be combined for a hundred years throughout the whole globe, to increase the numbers of mankind, and the fruitfulness of the earth, it is a melancholy consideration to reflect, that in that space of time their benevolent endeavors would only end in the increase of human misery; for the superfluous population produced, after the earth was fully peopled and cultivated, would require and receive some violent check to reduce it to the level of subsistence; every country being full, emigration would be impossible, and the calamity would be general in all countries at once. Nature has therefore provided that these checks should operate constantly and gradually, thus producing their effect with less violence than by one sudden explosion. And this is the state of things which philosophers and divines have delighted to contemplate as the best of all possible contrivances for the production of human happiness.⁵ A state in which men are compelled by the necessity of their nature, to be either perpetually murdering each other, or punishing themselves by a life of celibacy, to pre-

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On the State of Society

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vent their being starved ; a state in which the numbers of mankind are so continually pressing upon each other, that if the old don't die, the young must, and therefore thousands must be carried off in the flower of youth, and health, and virtue—because the old and the wicked have stronger constitutions. Hence it will be found, that what are commonly called divine judgments, and the scourges of guilty nations, are nothing more than the common operations of nature in conducting the mechanism of the world.

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sh. & be
regulated
by reason.*

Tho' thankful for many things that we enjoy, and for the destiny which sent us into this state of enjoyment, let us never insult our reason by unqualified praise of what we neither can fully comprehend, nor impartially approve. Tho' we should be content to take things as they are when they cannot be remedied, or endeavor to remedy what admits of being altered, let us never be withheld by any timid or false maxims of prudence, from expressing the disinterested conviction of our minds, even when it opposes established opinions. Let us fearlessly examine, and boldly pronounce the decision of our reason, and should we find it our duty to submit where resistance would be vain, our submission should

not be that of slaves, but of reasoning and intelligent beings, endeavoring to make the best of all that cannot be remedied, and to improve all that is capable of improvement.

The difference which exists, and ever will exist, between speculation and practice, is to speculative men no small source of disquiet, and has caused the world much calamity, from the desire that all men have to publish their speculations. It has its origin in the disproportion already stated, for while that remains as the fruitful parent of struggles and contentions among men, it will be in vain that philosophers or politicians attempt to realize those beautiful visions which it is so easy to conceive, and so difficult to execute. Theory and fact must never be at variance, because theory is nothing more than facts generalized; but the word theory is often used for the word speculation, which is almost perpetually contradicted by experience. The original source of inequality is established by nature, and a considerable portion of the same must be extended to all things in which this is concerned; she has given to men a reasoning faculty, which can "shape the goodliest forms of things," and yet neither their actions, nor her works conform to that standard. It is reasonable in

*The non-identity
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practice
&
theory.*

on the State of Society

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speculation to suppose, that she would proportion the productive powers of the earth to the support of the beings that she might send into the world, but the fact is otherwise; here then speculation and reality are at variance, and they who attempt to act upon this supposition will be in danger of doing much mischief, while they thus oppose the designs of nature. It is reasonable to suppose that men might in time be brought to act according to the principles of strict justice, and thus realize that happy state of which philosophers and divines have indulged themselves in the contemplation; but if they did, they would in time multiply so fast, that nature could not provide for their most moderate wants. There then we see a perpetual barrier opposed to the improvement of mankind, and that a considerable portion of evil must ever exist in the world, tho' much may be overcome by the exertions of mankind to improve their condition, and that these exertions are as much conformable to the designs of nature, as the impossibility of ever realizing a state of complete happiness. Vice and misery will ever be at work to reduce the numbers of mankind, and tho' they may be restrained, they can never be extirpated.

The state of the world has never yet permitted, nor ever will permit, a strict conformity to general maxims of prudence, which, tho' frequently of the greatest utility, require sometimes to be accommodated to the various situations of life; but of the measure of that accommodation, it is only men of superior minds who can judge, or to whom that power can be entrusted with safety. General rules are the leading strings of fools, men of sense only know how to depart from them, and such men are rare. The ultimate object of all our actions is happiness, the attainment of which object nothing can more materially obstruct than prepossessions and false persuasions. A prepossession is an opinion not founded in fact, nor in reason, and upon a strict examination it will be found, that the greatest part of our actions is grounded on these prepossessions. The whole of our religious belief rests on no other foundation, and therefore the superstructure can only be the receptacle of fraud, imposture, forgery, persecution, murder, and the whole train of evils which attend the love and the pursuit of power; for tho' religion pretends to subdue this passion and all the other bad passions, it has only served as a cloak to disguise them, in order the more effectually to

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always
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On the State of Society

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attain their object. Let us examine the world and its institutions accurately, and we shall find that most of those things which it is pretended are conducive to human happiness have tended to destroy it. General rules, which are only an accommodation to the weakness of human reason, have occasioned infinite misery, and when every case is determined solely by its own merits, that is, when the reason of individuals is sufficiently improved to admit of this mode of determination, private and general happiness will be considerably augmented. Till we can with safety relax the severity of general rules, they must unavoidably create great inconvenience and misery. To get rid therefore of all false notions relating to happiness is the greatest achievement which the progress of reason and philosophy can effect, they have made considerable advances within the last fifty years, and I have no doubt that the next fifty will nearly complete their journey. In one word, morality is the only sure friend of man, and religion his greatest enemy, because under pretence of ensuring the happiness of a future life, it lays useless and severe restraints upon the present, and gives one half of mankind a power to torment the other; and yet even

*morality,
superior
to
Religion*

after this great tormentor is removed, there will still remain numerous sources of misery, arising from the nature and constitution of the world, which no human power can alter or control. Virtue is the application of reason to the affairs of the world, or acting according to that standard of right which the general reason of mankind has established. It is not possible, however, for men at all times to comply with this rule; complete, unerring virtue is no more to be looked for in this world, than complete happiness; but as the inclination of man leads him to pursue the one, so it is his duty to aim at the other. Neither the works of nature, nor the works of man are faultless, hence, therefore, our expectations of excellence can never be realized; some defect there will always be found in every human being, and in every human performance, for if it were otherwise, men would either become immortal, or live too long. To die is the greatest defect of our nature, but it harmonizes with the rest of the system, in which all things are perpetually changing their shape. The earth cannot produce beyond a certain limit; man, therefore, cannot multiply nor exist beyond what is requisite to preserve the due proportion to his subsistence. The pro-

on the State of Society

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ductions of the earth, and the productions of man, are in a continual state of mutability; nothing is stationary, tho' some things change more slowly than others, and therefore the change is less perceived; even opinions the most venerable from their antiquity, in time become obsolete, and cease to be regarded. Tho' this perpetual rotation of things is productive of much evil, it produces also much pleasure, arising from variety.

*Objection,
arising from
the power of
nature.*

To this view of things it may perhaps be objected, that it tends to repress the ardor of patriotism, and the zeal for reformation, by giving room to believe, that all their efforts will be fruitless. I have only to answer, that were it not for the exertions of spirited, enlightened, and independent men, the world would be much worse than it is; so that no man need be afraid, that all he does will be to no purpose, nor on the other hand, that he can do too much; for nature will ever maintain her rights, and in all our exertions will prevent us from transgressing the limit which she has fixed. The constant tendency of mankind to increase their numbers, beyond the power of the earth to produce the means of subsistence, being thus proved to be the source of the principal evils in the world, it

becomes us to enquire how this tendency may be best counteracted, and how far the faculties of man are capable of meliorating his condition. The prejudice in favor of an excessive population, having its origin in that love of dominion so natural to man, renders it extremely difficult to be overcome; yet no one who impartially considers the matter, will deny that wars would be much less frequent if there were no hired soldiers; for, in modern times, it is chiefly of the refuse of society that armies are composed,—of men who, having no regular means of subsistence, let themselves out to fight the battles of interested and ambitious statesmen, and thus become drains to a redundant population. Surely this is an employment both disgraceful to themselves, and injurious to the rest of society, and could population be reduced by any other means, it would afford consolation to the philanthropist, and contribute to the increase of virtue and comfort; for a population of ignorance, vice, and misery, neither increases the honor, nor the prosperity of a nation. The first, the best, and the only certain means of limiting population to the increase of subsistence, and, at the same time, to promote the happiness of mankind, is the exercise of that virtue or prudence which prevents a man

Individual prudence the best check to excessive population

On the State of Society

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from propagating his species without the certainty of their support; but as this is a degree of self-denial not to be generally expected, and resting solely in the breasts of individuals, cannot be enforced by legislative provisions, other remedies must be looked for in aid of so precarious a dependence, and these can arise only from the paternal interference of government, which ought at all times to be more desirous of promoting the comfort of its subjects, than increasing their numbers; or at least, while they aim at an extensive population, to provide for a similar extent of comfort and convenience. Two things are especially required for this purpose; first, that government, on the one hand, should favor no scheme nor institution tending to an excessive population, like our present system of poor-laws, which hold out a bounty to vice and indolence, and on the other, that they do all in their power, by gentle means, to lessen the possession of enormous property in few hands, and by thus diffusing the wealth of society, create a proportionate increase of virtue, happiness, and comfort to a numerous population, without which no country can flourish. The only just and practicable method of promoting this desirable purpose, and to which I am of opi-

*That
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operate
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*Wealth
accumulating
into few
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nion that no weighty objection can be urged, is to destroy the right of primogeniture in the succession to property, whenever a father, mother, or other relation dies intestate. A law passed for this purpose would injure no one; it would deprive no one of any thing he possesses; it would interfere with no man's expectations, and take no man by surprise. To limit the case to those whose parents or friends have omitted to bequeath their property, is a remedy which, tho' slow is sure; it will not produce any great change in society for less than forty or fifty years; yet even that is sufficient for those who are more desirous of general good, than to gratify their own propensity to innovation, and it is more conformable to justice, policy, and humanity, than arbitrarily to decree that no man shall make an eldest son, but divide his property equally. Such a law has a direct tendency to an infinitely small division of property—an evil much greater than those which it proposes to remedy.

Whenever we desire to do a general good, we should carefully avoid even partial injustice; and tho' it is impossible to please all, we should endeavor to please as many as possible, for headlong reformers counteract their

*The latter
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in case
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*General
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be attained
at the expense
of private
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on the State of Society

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own intentions,—they make many enemies and few friends, and therefore meet with so many obstructions, that they arrive at their end more slowly than by gentle and moderate innovation. The means which I have proposed seem to promise much good, and to remove much evil, because a custom founded on injustice may be removed by the mere operation of time, without injuring those whose prejudices and expectations had taken deep root in the example of their forefathers.

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Whether the law of entails, as connected with the above-mentioned custom, ought also to be removed, deserves to be considered. I have no hesitation in saying, that it ought to remain as a barrier against the too small division of property; it is not without objections, yet they are in many cases balanced by its advantages. Entails of moderate estates are useful for the same reason that they are an evil in large ones; they serve to keep property together. That every man should do what he will with his own, is a fundamental law of society; let him then entail his property, or devise it in what manner he pleases; to interfere with this right is greater injustice than he can commit by any partial division of his effects. When a man leaves all his estate

to one child, he may be said to be unkind to the rest, but not unjust, because they have no right to any part of it, and of that which they have no right to, they cannot be unjustly deprived. The alteration I have proposed by no means interferes with the right of any individual to dispose of his property; it only aims at removing a custom which is unjust, because it gives all that to one which others have an equal claim to; for when a man has neglected to avail himself of that right which society guarantees to him, viz. the right of devising his property, it is fair and equitable that those who are most nearly related to him should enjoy it in common with each other. Every man should be allowed to dispose of his property, whether inherited or acquired, under certain restrictions; but if he neglects to do so, let society do it for him, according to the principles of justice and equality.

The remedy here proposed for the evils occasioned by immense property is just and moderate; it will be chiefly produced by time, and time is the enemy of no man, for it regards all men alike, and gently softens the effects of folly and prejudice. Whoever thinks to remove in a day the institutions (whether political or religious), which have existed for ages.

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*evils
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from the
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of wealth*

will find that he is in danger of doing more harm than good, and that he will not be seconded by the general voice, nor even by a small part of mankind, for prejudice always remains longest with the multitude, as they judge not from reason, but from authority, from custom, and from partial evidence. The evils occasioned by the present enormous inequality of property are so numerous and so weighty, that it is difficult to know which to mention first, yet that which is by no means the least, is the respect attached to riches in preference to every other possession, so great, indeed, as to invert the natural order of things, and to raise the meanest, both in body and mind, to the highest pitch of rank and dignity, while talents, virtue, and learning, frequently perish in obscurity and poverty. Juvenal lamented this evil near two thousand years ago, and it is not yet diminished. The importance which is given to men of fortune, both by the actual force of their property, and by the tacit consent of mankind, in all matters whether of opinion, taste, or authority, has a most pernicious effect on things of the greatest moment, as well as on the lesser affairs of custom and fashion. Laws and regulations materially injurious to the generality of mankind,

are frequently enacted by the weight and power of rich men, which could never otherwise have been even proposed, and the share they exclusively possess in the legislature of this country is frequently adverse to the interest of the middle and lower ranks. I do not mean that the influence of property in the constitution is at any rate an evil, for property is certainly the safest claim to represent, and be represented, but that the great preponderance of the landed and monied interests is hostile to the interests of the other ranks of society.

The only legitimate use of riches is to acquire happiness for ourselves, without encroaching upon the happiness of others; but when they are diverted from their natural channel, and become the means of political corruption, or individual oppression, they inundate and devastate, like the overflowings of a mighty river, the lands they were intended to fertilize. When riches usurp the place of talents, and seat themselves in the chair of wisdom, they take what they have no claim to, and disturb the natural order of things. When they place their possessors in elevated situations, for which they are neither qualified by abilities nor education, they become a public grievance by depriving the state of the ser-

The use of

on the State of Society

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vices of those men whose talents are thus suffered to lie dormant. And even when rich men, by their influence in the state, are the means of obtaining for others those offices for which merit is the only claim, they equally endanger the public safety, by placing the guidance of the whole, or the execution of particular parts, in the hands of those to whom, from their want of ability, they ought not to be confided. Let the rich man enjoy himself in the pleasures of sense, or the pleasures of benevolence, and spend his money in private as he pleases, but let him not presume, by the mere force of his property, to influence the affairs of government, nor interfere where he has no just claim from his talents, natural or acquired. To expect this degree of forbearance and honest principle from men who know and feel their power, and hardly conceive it to be injurious, is vain and chimerical; it is only by the wisdom and virtue of those who administer the government, or the wholesome strength of the law, that the improper use of riches can be successfully opposed, and without these, no government can long resist the force of that undermining corruption, which is the sure attendant of enormous wealth.

The increase of luxury which attends the ac-

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as
to which*

cumulation of property in few hands, is among the greatest of the evils it occasions; for that luxury is an evil, however some men may have doubted it, and others denied, is incontestible, if we consider its effects on public and private morality. Comfort may be enjoyed by many,—luxury is only the lot of a few, and it is this which constitutes its distinctive mischief; for where many are aiming at what only a few can possess, they must endeavor to overreach one another, and thus the fences of morality are overthrown in the contest. All institutions, therefore, which have a tendency to favor the acquisition of enormous property, are destructive of that progress in wisdom and virtue which tends to the highest improvement and refinement of our nature.

The profligate waste which is ever the attendant on great masses of property, is also an evil of no mean magnitude. To those who are unacquainted with the interior of a great man's house this may appear imaginary, but the fact cannot be controverted, that both from the unavoidable and intentional waste committed in such houses, hundreds might be comfortably maintained; by the friends of population, let this consideration be duly attended to. The possessors of enormous property, while

*profligacy,
and evil*

on the state of society

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they thus diminish the comforts and vitiate the morals of their inferiors, are themselves not always happy; they are like spoilt children, whose every wish and desire is gratified as soon as formed, so that they lose all the pleasures of expectation and hope. They rove from one amusement to another, which, like the playthings of children, are eagerly sought for, and soon thrown aside; disgusted with satiety, they seek for what wealth cannot give, and find others happier than themselves, not because they have more enjoyments, but because they are easier pleased. Their pampered appetites and indulged caprices can relish nothing simple in food, dress, or furniture; art and luxury exhaust all their stores to reanimate human nature, which has already sunk under their embraces. All their enjoyments consist of mere corporeal gratification which, by constant repetition, at length become insipid, and leave them without a hope or a pleasure, but to forget their misery in the empty buz of a crowd, as wretched and contemptible as themselves. Their education, their manners, and their rank, keep them for ever at a distance from all but their own set; they are therefore ignorant of the rest of mankind, and to know each other they call know-

ing the world, and beyond that they know nothing. As to the lower ranks, they consider them as a distinct race of beings, formed only for their use, and supported only by their wealth. The importance attached to riches, and the superiority they confer in the present state of civilized society, are a temptation to all men to acquire them either by honest or dishonest means; we need not wonder, therefore, at the maxim of a celebrated statesman, who affirmed, that every man had his price, for while riches exclusively confer honor, power, and luxury, every man is liable to be tempted to acquire them, even dishonestly. To yield to temptations which gratify our strongest propensities is natural,—to remove these temptations does not alter, but improve our nature.

To the remains of the feudal system of tyranny and oppression, and to the subsequent institution of chivalry, are to be imputed, as secondary causes, many of the evils which at present exist in society. The founders of that institution, convinced of the radical cruelty and injustice of the feudal law, sought to conceal some of its most glaring enormities under the specious coverings of loyalty, gallantry, and honor. An unbounded submission to their

*The institution,
particular
systems,
secondary
causes of
misery*

** Sir Robert Walpole*

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leaders, a false and superstitious attachment to the persons of women, which degraded and enslaved their minds, and a strong, ungovernable spirit of haughtiness, disguised under the name of honor, were the chief characteristics of the hero in the times of chivalry; and tho' the warlike part of the two systems has decayed thro' time, or been softened by other institutions, yet all their leading principles are yet to be found in the laws of property, gallantry, and honor, which as they originated in force and folly, retain much of their original character. The servile adoration which is paid to artificial rank and dignity, is not one of the least degrading and pernicious consequences of the feudal and chivalrous spirit; it damps the ardor of all moral competitions, and confounds the distinction between vice and virtue, even more effectually than the power of riches. It is in truth more contemptible, as it has no intrinsic, nor even relative value, but in the opinion of mankind; whereas the other must always have a certain degree of positive as well as relative worth, while the conventions of civilized society continue to exist.—The respect paid to officers of power and trust, to legislators, and to all that are in authority, when they are chosen for their virtues or their

talents, is founded on reason, and sanctioned by necessity; but the mere arbitrary distinction of names, compared with the superior distinction of splendid merit, is poor and contemptible; it excites no sentiments of esteem or respect, and if it is outwardly honored, it is inwardly despised.

The state of females in modern society, tho' *on the* far superior in many free countries to those *of Fem* which are despotic and barbarous, has yet *in Soc* much in it to be lamented and amended.— They are admitted to a more equal state of familiarity and intercourse than formerly; they are the companions of our gaiety and relaxation, but seldom of our more serious hours, and if their minds are capable of rational exertion, it is more by chance than by education or intentional improvement; for except in some splendid examples of those who have done themselves justice, and risen superior to the general degradation of their sex, the treatment of women is not calculated to improve their minds, or give them that rank and weight in society which they have in many instances shewn they deserve. Their instruction extends not beyond a few frivolous accomplishments, and if they can but shine in company, it is all that is expected of them, and all

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they desire. To excel in fine works, which at best is but specious idleness, to execute a difficult piece of music, or to play well at cards, is to be completely accomplished, if these are accompanied with a degree of fashionable ease and impudence, but their minds are left to receive the bias which chance or circumstances may impress. Who then can wonder that women are more the sport of their feelings than men, when so little pains are taken to strengthen their judgment? The more violent and boisterous passions are indeed kept within bounds, by the common restraints of decency and the opinion of society, but the more secret and dangerous from hence receive additional strength and vigor; there are few women, particularly if they have met with disappointment, who are not proud, jealous, envious, revengeful, cruel, and insidious. In the generality of women, every thing relating to the mind is little, illiberal, and narrow; their sentiments are not the result of reflection, but of imitation; they have no enlarged views of human nature, no principles of action but their immediate interest, their pleasure, or amusement; their conversation, therefore, is not such as can engage the attention or delight the superior mind of a well-informed

man; if it is not about dress, it is scandal or anecdote. An illiterate woman, if clever, is dangerous; if not, she is generally contemptible. Yet there are women, and I should be guilty both of ingratitude and injustice if I said there were not, who with elegant manners, cultivated minds, and liberal sentiments, are formed for the delight and instruction of all around them; who can both give and receive information with pleasure, and are qualified to discharge all the relative duties of life with firmness, dignity, and precision; who know and feel their *own* importance without trenching upon that which nature and society have for wise purposes conferred on their superiors. There are others, who, without much information, or strength of character, win our affection and esteem by the simplicity of their manners, the vivacity of their tempers, and the amiable sweetness of their whole deportment. Happy is the man who has found one of either description to be the partner of his griefs, his joys, and his comforts, he has secured one of the first essentials to happiness, and will find the pleasure of his life exalted by participation, and its evils lessened. The influence of women on our minds and modes of living is certainly very different from both

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in nature and degree from what it ought to be, and not only requires to be diminished but improved. Were women more rational, they would not be less agreeable, but less the object and the cause of luxury; at present their minds are degraded in order to flatter their vanity, and this degradation has a similar effect on the minds of men; we spoil each other, we mutually corrupt and are corrupted.

principle
honor

The word honor, when it means that purity of principle which preserves a man from every thing mean and contemptible in thought, word, or deed, is a valuable supplement to the law of the land and the laws of morality; but when it means no more than that wretched relique of barbarism, which consists in a tender sensibility to fancied injuries, is rather a prejudice than a principle, for it exists solely in opinion, and by opinion can at any time be removed. The man who is offended applies to the sword alone for redress, and if his adversary is of too high a rank to join in equal combat, he has no retreat from that shame which a word, a look, or a gesture may inflict, but in suicide or banishment. No consideration of duty, *affection*, nor interest can restrain him whose honor is concerned, from resorting to extremities, and all other rela-

also
honor

tions of life are sacrificed to false ideas of shame and contempt. A sentiment thus irritable and delicate, tho' it may tend to polish and refine, has in it originally, a considerable mixture of barbarism; it forms an incongruous union of the civilized and savage state; for tho' honor is one of those feelings which considerably tends to refinement, yet death is the barbarous resort of savages. Honor, therefore, in modern times, might surely be satisfied with a more moderate atonement; but the opinion of the world holds the contrary, and no man is bold enough to brave it.

The military system which at present prevails in all the states of Europe is a remnant of feudal tyranny, considerably diminished and modified, by the improvements which have been introduced into civilized society, yet it can at best only be tolerated as an evil, which a more improved state of civilization may remove; it cannot indeed be dispensed with at present, because the people are not, in any nation, sufficiently enlightened to be governed entirely without force; yet it is an evil sincerely to be lamented, for all military establishments are essentially destructive of the health, morals, and comforts of those who compose them, and can only be called for at home

The military system an evil

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against a mob. When the mob is civilized, there will be no occasion for the military.— When governments act justly, there will be no need of force, for the people never rise against themselves. A government of barracks, of spies, and informers, has a natural tendency to degrade both the instruments and the sufferers, for a soldiery who are ready to execute any thing, and a people who are prepared to submit to them, must be lost to all the energies of virtue, and ready for the yoke of despotism.

*The evils
of Foreign
Wars*

There is another purpose for which military establishments are required, more nefarious, if possible, than the former, which is, external war,—a practice involving in itself such a combination of guilt and misery as can hardly be imagined to proceed from the malice of infernal beings, much less from men to each other. To keep in pay and training two sets of men who are called out to murder one another, and to desolate their respective countries alternately, without any quarrel of their own, at the mere will and pleasure of a few ambitious men, who might as well settle their disputes by any other means, is a phenomenon which can only be accounted for by supposing it an essential part of the system; but while it re-

mains, the world can never be completely civilized, nor can we suppose it to be governed by a Being infinitely benevolent.

*effects of
the abolishing
feudal
tenures
&c*

The abolition of the great feudal tenures in this country, about the commencement of the sixteenth century, the invention of printing, and the introduction of commerce, all contributed to give a new turn to the pursuits of mankind, and to lessen the evils of military power and ignorance. Yet the great principles of inequality remaining the same, the tendency to the accumulation of property was not destroyed; and tho' the comforts of life were inevitably more diffused, yet they were not so much so as to prevent the establishment of a new aristocracy, viz.—that of money, which, by degrees, committed inroads upon the other, till having acquired an equal share of importance, it divided with it the power and honors of the state, so that instead of one we have now two aristocracies, those of landed and commercial property.

*The effects
of wealth*

The establishments of religion which exist at present in the principal states of Europe, had their origin, like feudal tyranny, in the love of dictating to mankind, and are encroachments on that unrestrained liberty of thinking and acting, which all men are desirous to claim for

*The love of
power, the
origin of
Religion*

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themselves, and few are willing to allow to others.

*Religion
originated
in the
ignorance
of mankind*

Mankind, when they first began to reason, attempted to account for the phænomena of nature and the government of the world, and unwilling to rest satisfied with what are termed secondary causes, they invented doctrines and systems of theology as the origin and sanction of all the good and all the evil that are in the world, nay they even subjected the most obvious rules and principles of morality to divine interference by attaching them to some divine fable. Every system of religion invented by man requires a national establishment to preserve it from innovation and decay; it cannot stand the test of time and examination; it must, therefore, be supported by authority, and is on that account essentially hostile to the progress of reason, and an evil of no small or partial nature. Nothing tends so much to weaken the mind of man as religion, for as it is founded on implicit faith, and requires a total submission of the understanding, it renders its adherents incapable of reasoning on all subjects in which its tenets are concerned, so that the strongest minds in other respects are here exerted only in the invention of plausible arguments to defend what cannot

be defended on the principles of impartial reasoning.—To prove the total inefficacy of religion, it is only requisite to shew that societies might subsist and have subsisted without religion, but not without morality; the one exists only in imagination, the other depends wholly on practice, and tho' it may be said that practice arises from faith, it may be answered that it is much more certain to arise from reason and interest—teach men that it is their interest to be virtuous, and you need no longer lead them by their imagination, and yet there are many good sort of people, who not being able to give a reason for what they believe, insist upon it that their belief can do no harm; but I say that it does harm by making any one believe it can do good. All doctrines of religion rest nearly on the same grounds, viz.—the faith of those who receive them, for they are by their nature incapable of proof; but the excellence of moral precepts may be proved by their practical utility; they require, therefore, no extraneous aid, and have their best safeguard in the common sense and common interest of mankind; they are less liable to be affected by the customs of different nations, and being also of general utility, are more certain of general acceptance;

*The inefficacy
of Religion
is stated*

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on these there has hitherto been little difference of opinion, and that difference is not likely to be increased, but the disputes of theologians have not only for ages kept the world at variance, but deluged it with blood. When all different sects and religions are disencumbered of establishments, it will then be seen what they can do for themselves, they will then submit to a genuine test of their authenticity. Morality, or the religion of reason, requires no such test; it has already been sufficiently proved, and is never in danger but when protected by religious interference, because all religions tend to make men substitute faith for morality. The principal cause why positive institutions have hitherto been more regarded than moral precepts, is that the former are authoritatively commanded by the voice of an individual, claiming for himself a divine commission, while the other are only to be collected from the general sense of mankind.

*morality,
the Religion
of nature*

*unity of the
real principles
diversity
Religions*

The moral principles which have been supposed to require the aid of religion, are in all countries nearly the same, which is a proof that they are fixed and indispensable in their nature; while the religions which support them are various as the climates of the globe, and extravagant as the fancies of their differ-

ent authors. Morality is founded on the reason of mankind, and has for its object the general advantage. Religion is founded on their folly, in pretending to dive into that which they can never comprehend, and is converted into a gainful trade, for a particular set of individuals; the one is simple and uniform, the other is various, mutable, and confused. We neither know, nor can know, the intentions of the Supreme Being, because we are ignorant of his nature, and without he is a man like ourselves, which the ignorant generally conceive him, there can be no such a thing as a revelation of his will; for we have not faculties to comprehend a divine intelligence. We talk of inspiration, and yet know nothing about the nature of spirit, or how it acts upon matter; a revelation, therefore, from a Being whose nature we are unacquainted with, is a contradiction in terms. There can be no evidence of a supernatural agency acting upon the mind of man, without it enables him to tell with certainty things which could not otherwise be known, and there is nothing in either the Old or New Testament which can bear such a test, for all that is there declared to be foretold, is dark and ambiguous, and capable of almost any interpretation, and all

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that is said to have happened contrary to the established laws of nature, is incapable of proof, because it contradicts the experience of our senses, which are the only medium of knowledge or evidence. Every religion has its Bible, and all are equally at variance with reason, and equally indebted to credulity; reason is the only true Bible of man, and all that is above or contrary to reason, is no object of his faith. Religion has done more harm than good to mankind, because it has been the subject of contention, rather than the parent of peace. If there had been only one religion in the world, it might have been useful; the variety, not only of religions, but of sects, has destroyed the utility of them all. Priests are essentially intolerant when their spiritual opinions are connected with their temporal power; it is in vain, therefore, to hope for social harmony, till they cease to be distinguished from the laity.

The Doctrine of The doctrine of uncorrupted reason, or, as
Atheism it is called, Atheism, has at all times been proscribed as injurious to the very existence of society, while in fact, it is only injurious to the existence of religion; to say that men cannot exist without religion, is to a certain extent to proscribe the use of reason. Freethinking is

supposed to be incompatible with morality, but this can only be by such as confound Free-thinkers with those who never think at all, for to think and act agreeably to reason is the only true foundation of morality. Cicero says,

"If you remove the worship of the Gods, all confidence and union among men, and even justice itself will be removed."—*De Nat. Deo-*

rum 2. It is difficult to see how a belief in such gods as those of the heathens, and even the God of the christians, can uphold faith and justice more strongly than reason and mutual interest,—this truth, tho' hidden under a load of error accumulated from age to age, will sometimes dare to shew itself to pure and unadulterated minds, and of this we see many specimens both in ancient and modern times.—

Many of the ancient philosophers saw it by no means indistinctly, and many of the moderns, notwithstanding their religion, have had glimpses of light flash upon them from the free exercise of their reason. In order to prove the necessity of religion to a state, the prevalence of immorality and every species of corruption in France has been produced as an unanswerable argument. I will first ask, whether in states that are more outwardly religious, there is less of vice and immorality?—

*Cicero's
opinion
of the
Heathen
deities*

*the
immorality
of France
attributed
to its religion*

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and I will then attempt to prove that the immorality of France arises not from the want of religion, but from other and more powerful causes. That corrupt religion which prevailed in France before the revolution, a religion which sanctioned so many follies and iniquities, threw those who were disgusted with them into the opposite extreme, and led them to suppose that nature had placed no bounds to the indulgence of their appetites, and that those placed by society were only the invention of legislators for their own selfish purposes, and not for the common interest. The next great cause of immorality, is the ignorance of the true principles of morality and social intercourse, or a selfish and short-sighted view of the nature of society.

*moral
unapt
to be
only
forced.*

Men who have not been early instructed in the nature and foundation of moral obligation, will not easily acquire very correct notions of them afterwards; they cannot acquire correct or enlarged views of society after they have begun to mix with the world; they will, therefore, act only on the selfish, short-sighted, narrow principle of temporary interest, and consider the immediate gratification of their passion as the only true wisdom, and the only object of their lives, whereas, if they were

taught in their earliest youth that the interest of individuals is inseparable from that of the whole, and that no man can injure others without ultimately injuring himself, their principal endeavor throughout life would be to do good to others. The force of early impressions is such, that some men who are at present crafty, subtle, voluptuous, avaricious, tyrannical, or debauched, might have been altogether the reverse of what they are. The chief cause of the immorality of France, and of all other countries, is the want of moral education.

Among the many evils which even the most blind and prejudiced will acknowledge to exist in the present state of society, the condition of servants is by no means the least. I do not, however, agree with a celebrated philosopher,* that the evil is without remedy, nor do I expect to be smiled at for my simplicity, in attempting to deprive it of its sting, for what is it that makes the condition of servants deplorable, but the ill-treatment they receive from their masters, and whence does that arise but from not duly considering their state of

*on the Condition
of Menial
Servants*

*in reply
to
Godwin*

* Godwin's Enquirer.

mutual dependence? There is nothing contradictory to reason, nor offensive to humanity, in the mere idea of subserviency, for we are all subservient one to another in various ranks and degrees, and surely the servant who is supplied with every comfort, and is also enabled to save from his wages the means of future subsistence, is not more pitiable than an inferior tradesman or a hired mechanic. Let us strive to enlighten the minds of masters and servants on the nature of their relative duties, or that conduct which each has a right to expect from the other, and there will then surely be no greater hardship in being the servant of an individual, than a servant of the public—a man who can hardly call his time or talents his own, when they are in a state of perpetual and hired activity. The housekeeper in a great family has generally a more comfortable life than the mistress of a great inn, and a gentleman's gentleman is often more his own master than a lawyer in full practice. The difference, it will be said, is great, because the one is making a fortune, and the other is earning a mere subsistence; the fact is true, but the difference is very little to the feelings of the person, because they are each by habit adapted to their situation, and the one may

be as well content with moderate, as the other with excessive gain. Even the utmost severity of a master can make very little difference in their feelings, such is the effect of custom, and where a master is kind and considerate, the balance of happiness will most probably be on the side of the servant, against the innkeeper or lawyer.

A philosopher, sitting coolly in his study, *studious in* and contemplating the human race thro' a *sometimes* telescope of his own making, may fancy that *from exten* the feelings of all men in similar situations are *abstractu* the same; but the fact is otherwise, for the *pr Socie* feelings of men depend much on their habits, and therefore those of a man who has been born, and of one who is reduced to be a servant, will be very different, and the former are often happier than their masters and mistresses; so that the compassion which is kindly bestowed on them, is often extremely misapplied. The great evil to be lamented in society, is the present state of servants, not the existence of servitude; but until their superiors are reformed, their habits and condition will never be improved, nor their evil dispositions rooted out; it is not a vice in their nature, but the effect of their situation, for men are the creatures of circumstances, and acquire their

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ideas from those by whom they are surrounded. The education of the poor must be improved, and the behavior of the rich to their inferiors must be altered; before the latter can expect good and faithful servants; at present they have totally separate interests, and they are distinguished on the one side by rapacity, dishonesty, impertinence, deceit, and treachery, and on the other by tyranny, illiberality, oppression, injustice, and cruelty. From this picture it admits not of a doubt, that both sides require a proportional improvement before they can be satisfied with each other, and this improvement must originate in the attention of the higher ranks to the education of the poor—an education which shall teach them, that their real interest depends on their integrity and respectful behavior, and when they find these expectations fulfilled, they will in time become a different race of beings. They must be taught also by example, as well as by precept, for the morality of servants depends greatly on the morality of their masters; but when they have neither example nor precept to aid them in the performance of their duty, we must not wonder if they are in general grossly deficient, nor expect of them to be proof against temptations which they

see that their superiors never attempt to resist. Servants, like children, are generally what we make them; if they are well brought up, and treated kindly, they will be grateful in return, and such treatment they have a right to expect from the relation in which they stand to us. Their wages they receive for the mere service they perform, but to kindness they are entitled as fellow-men, as fellow-citizens, and fellow-christians, and even if they are ungrateful or ungenerous, it is our duty, after rebuking, to pardon their offences, not only unto seven times, but unto seventy times seven, or at least till experience has convinced us, that they cannot be reformed. We should consider them as men of like passions and feelings with ourselves, and endeavor, by all the means in our power, to unite their interest to ours; for while they are taught to consider themselves as a separate class, they will have separate interests, and think that whatever they can take from their masters is gained to themselves. The case will be very different when masters reward them in proportion to their fidelity, and prove themselves grateful for faithful service, lenient to their faults, and studious of their comfort, The reverse of all this is the general

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conduct of the world, for servants are considered by many people as a distinct race of beings, formed solely for *their* use, and subservient to *their* pleasure, and tho' they are obliged to pay them wages, yet, from that circumstance, they think themselves entitled to all they can require. By such people, servants are treated like negroes, incapable of improvement; their faults are not the effect of their situation, they say, but the vice of their nature. Has the experiment of civilization ever been fairly tried with either? and yet there are instances among both, where gentle treatment, and moderate instruction have produced virtues, of which the most refined natures only are supposed to be capable. We have had instances of affectionate attachment in servants, to those who have lost or been deserted by their friends,—of servants, who in the hour of distress, have shared their slender pittance with their masters,—of servants who have braved even danger and death in following the fortunes of those to whom they have been attached. Let us not then hastily abandon the whole rank as incapable of improvement, or by such cruel ideas of human nature, widen the separation which society has placed between those who give, and those

who receive wages, but let us strengthen the bonds of interest by the ties of affection, and treat those who by chance are our inferiors, as if they were by nature our equals; and when we expect gratitude, let us not forget benevolence. On the other hand, let it be remembered, that servants, like children, may be spoilt by neglect, and by indulgence; when they are suffered to do wrong without reproof or control, they will acquire habits of vice and idleness, and become vile and worthless.

Exceptions, no doubt, are to be found to this account of the general treatment of servants, but these are to be attributed rather to the temper of the persons they serve, than to any sense of duty arising from a knowledge of the relations which men hold to each other, for even those who behave most kindly to their servants, seem to consider them as their natural inferiors, and speak of them as such.— Their general expressions are “the creatures,” “the man,” “the woman.” “the poor girl,” or “the fellow.” Such words convey little idea of mutual dependence, or social regard, and are only stronger proofs than any before adduced, that the relative duties between masters and servants are little understood, and seldom performed. Viewing the state of ser-

Improper treatment of Servants?

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vants, from the uppermost in a great nobleman or gentleman's family, to the lowest solitary drudge at three pounds a year, I have no hesitation in saying, that, with a few exceptions, there is much room for amendment. The pampered minions of a great house are often taken, for their personal appearance, from the lowest state of poverty and ignorance, and suddenly exalted to liveried splendor and pompous idleness, to stand as the gaudy puppets of parade behind a splendid vehicle of fashion, or fill up the useless attendance of a rout or a dining-room. The rest of their day is spent in gaming, intriguing, and quarrelling, to get rid of the listless languor of idleness; they are the panders of their master's lusts, and the slaves of their caprices, and when, by this sort of life, they are sufficiently spoilt, and become worthless and saucy, they are turned out of their palaces, to be hanged or transported. Against such servitude, which is only serving an apprenticeship to vice, well might the philosopher exclaim with indignation and regret, and while he only laments the present state of servants, I will heartily join him; but when he considers their existence in society as an obstruction to that state of pure equality which he delights to contem-

plate, I must smile at his visionary theory.

To examine all the gradations of servitude, *Vices*
 and to remark their different defects, is by *Servants*
 no means requisite; enough has been said *may of*
 generally to be applied to every state, and *be in the*
 more will be said to the same purpose. When *to the*
 masters and mistresses are inattentive to the *employ*
 morality and mental condition of their servants, and consider them as mere instruments of their pleasures or their pomp, they must not wonder if they are ungrateful, dishonest, or unprincipled; yet they who have accused them of these vices, have repeated their complaints to each other with so much self-complacency and success, as hardly to believe it possible, that for all these ill qualities in their servants, they themselves are to blame. Let us, however, only consider the relative situations of the two parties.—Society is but a great family, in which the interests of the whole, and of individuals, well understood, are mutual; whoever, therefore, is too eager in pursuit of his own interest, to the prejudice of others, does harm to himself in the end, because he gives an example, which, if generally followed, would be injurious to individuals. The consideration, therefore, of general consequences, which has been so often and

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so ably enforced, is the great ground-work of morality in all the various ranks of society ; it is strongly applicable to those of whom I am treating, and were this generally violated, the œconomy of the whole would be disturbed. Masters and servants stand to each other in the relations of informed and ignorant ; the latter, therefore, have a right to be instructed, and it is the duty and interest of the former to instruct them, either before or after they enter their service. Ignorance of our true interest is the great mental want of mankind in all ranks of life, but most prevalent in the lower, from a defect in the means of instruction, and the pressing nature of their necessities, which induces them to believe, that that which immediately lies before them is the most for their interest, without any consideration of consequences. The great distinction between ignorance and knowledge, is only that one man knows more and sees farther than another. Their wants are fewer than those of their superiors, but their means of gratifying them are more coarse, more direct and obvious ; they are less under the restraints of shame and public opinion, and they have less to suffer from a reverse of fortune. From all these considerations, it is evident

that their minds must be enlightened by a sense of duty arising from a knowledge of their true and ultimate interest, before they can be expected to be faithful or honest; at present they are often hired for insufficient wages, ill-treated, and ill-fed, and consequently are deprived of those means of improvement which a different treatment might afford.

Had Mr Godwin been a little better acquainted with that rank of people whose lot he seems so mistakenly to commiserate, he would have spared his pity for those who better deserve it, and probably have omitted a chapter in his book which does him no credit, either as a man or a philosopher. His censure, in the first place, is too general, for there are servants as well as masters of all ranks. The servants of the higher ranks are far from being so meanly lodged and fed as Mr Godwin asserts; there are many of them whose time is more at their own disposal, and whose whole lot is little inferior to that of gentlemen; they have leisure, and they have the means of improvement, but they do not all employ them, and so far from being regarded in no better light than mere *automata*, they are treated with consideration and respect; I do not say that this is the case with all, but certainly with

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so many as to make Mr Godwin's general censure, unjustly severe. The wealth of servants differ like those of their masters, but it can by no means be said, that the wages of those among the higher ranks are too small, tho' among the middle ranks they certainly are. The mind, like the body of man, can happily accommodate itself to almost any situation; so far, therefore, are servants from cherishing either "a burning envy or an unextinguishable hatred" in their bosoms, that there are few of them who are not content with their lot, except they happen to fall in the way of some benevolent philosopher, who kindly tells them they are wretched. No person can be a good servant who does not take a pleasure in his work, and consider his master's interest as his own, which in fact it is, for his wages are the reward of his time and attention, and if the wages are his own, that for which he is paid must be so too, while he is about it—the more faithfully a servant performs his duty, the more his interest and that of his master become indented—Were servants more accustomed to think, it would be better both for their masters and themselves—Happiness is very fortunately dependant solely on the constitution and habits of the mind, and is not re-



strained to one set of ideas, nor to one state of life. Many a servant has as great pleasure in cooking a dinner or nursing a child, as a philosopher has in writing a book, and could philosophers only imagine that there is such a thing as happiness, out of the sphere within which alone they have conceived it to reside, they would let those rest quiet who do not suffer positive misery, and, for ought they know, may enjoy greater happiness than themselves. The condition of servants, like all other conditions, certainly admits of great improvement, and there is no doubt that it has and will keep pace with the improving spirit of the times, but Mr Godwin goes too far in wishing to subvert all distinctions of rank, and reduce all men to civil and moral equality. Men who seem bent on new-modelling the whole of society, give much room to suspect that the greatest evil it contains is within their own bosoms, and when they talk of "burning envy and deep-rooted hatred," it must be supposed they judge of others by themselves; for why should a servant, who has every comfort he wishes for, envy the lot of his master? or why should we suppose that they envy their superiors more than other ranks of mankind? The fact is, they do not, and both parties are ca-

luminated by a set of men who wish well to neither. The lot of servants, even in their present state, is far from being pitiable; they have their conversation, their amusements, and their comforts; they have every thing requisite for them, provided without any thought or trouble of their own; they know not the cares of a family, nor the miseries with which their masters are many times beset; they have their minds and their bodies constantly employed, and have therefore no time for the pains of imagination, nor the languor of *ennui*; they sleep sound after wholesome labor, and they rise up refreshed to pursue their daily task; every little recreation to them has a double relish, and they are cheerful, because they have no time to invent imaginary wants; they are happy when they know their duty, and perform it, and have no thoughts beyond the sphere in which they are employed; I speak this of the generality. Taking a fair estimate of the state of servitude in England, I have no hesitation in affirming, that there is no intolerable hardship in the condition of a servant, when the relative duties it imposes are well understood, and that considering the state of mutual dependence, in which human society will most probably for ever remain, the

services of one part of mankind can no more be dispensed with, than those of another.

The consequences to be deduced from all *The Eur complan* that has hitherto been said concerning the *not radi* leading principles of society, the civil, religious, and military institutions, which have *but caps* been transmitted, with little variation, from *of cas* the times of feudal superstition and tyranny, *renub* contain no very flattering representation of the present state of things. But without returning to a state of nature, which some men of warm imagination and lively sensibility, disgusted with present evils, have hastily, and I will add, foolishly, suggested, it is possible that a more improved state of society may yet arrive, in which, without overturning the distinction of ranks, or equalizing the possession of property, much good may be obtained, and many oppressive evils removed. The principal injuries which result from the institutions above mentioned, consist in diminishing the respect which is due to virtue and talents, and by attaching it to rank and wealth, keeping mankind at a distance from each other, by the artificial distinctions of title, and the too powerful influence of money, and preventing that free intercourse of opinion, by which alone all ranks can be enlightened and improved.

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From the palace to the cottage, there are numerous gradations, and it is well that there should be; but it is not well that these distinctions should inspire one man with a contempt for another, particularly in those cases where the shades of difference between them are so slight as hardly to be perceived. To those who possess virtue, talents, or accomplishments, their rank in life should be no obstacle to their being admitted into the company of any other, and those who possess none of these qualities, deserve not to be shielded from contempt, in whatever station they are placed.

The contention which is excited for wealth and honors, is a natural consequence of the extravagant consideration in which these things are held, and since men are no longer able to subvert each other by open violence, they are compelled to resort to deception and fraud, and endeavor to gain the object of their hopes by secret attacks. It is not then to be wondered, that upon a nearer view of society, it should be found to be *A system of plunder throughout*, nation robbing nation, and individuals robbing each other, all eager for riches and honors, no man truly a friend to another when their interests come in competition, professing kindness, to answer their own purposes,

tie of
society
in the
mind of
mankind

flattering to deceive, jealous of others, and not happy themselves, envious even of the merest trifles. The rich are proud and insolent, debauched, profligate, and unprincipled; the poor, ignorant and ungrateful; the middle ranks, hard-hearted and illiberal, spending their time and their money in gross indulgence; courtiers, smooth and deceitful; merchants, avaricious and selfish; the young profligate, and the old severe; religion lost in ceremonies, and her ministers in the search after preferment; morality little respected, and learning frequently wasted in idle disquisitions; women the gaudy puppets of shew and vanity; children uneducated, and turned loose upon the world, to make their way as chance or passion guides; taxes oppressive, and the poor starving; the fruits of industry squandered to keep the world at war, and knaves fattening, whilst honest men starve and die. For my own part, I can truly say that I have sacrificed much for the good of others, and my reward has been ingratitude and unkindness. I have not, however, given up the world in despair, I trust that others who are disposed to shew kindness to their fellow-creatures may be more fortunate than I have been. I am not yet weary of well-

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doing, for I am certain that there are some honest men in the world; all are not ungrateful, proud, cruel, selfish, and unkind.

*The
reception
the
rational
principles*

The pleasures and advantages which society is capable of affording when loosened from the restraints of artificial connections, and the cultivation of reason is not suppressed in any set of men, out of respect for the privileges of others, tho' they may never be fully enjoyed in our time, may yet be contemplated at a distance, without danger, and with benevolent delight. The reason which Nature has given us, is the same in all men, and equally capable of cultivation for the common purposes of life; why then should that faculty be suffered to lie dormant in any man, and his mind be left a barren waste? I am not contending for an equal degree of polish and refinement in all—a thing perhaps impossible in any state of society; I am only desirous that the rational faculties of men should be so cultivated, as to enable them to know their duty and their interest, to prevent them being the dupes or slaves of others, and coming under the denomination of what is contemptuously called the mob. It is, therefore, by no means a thing indifferent, that the people should be civilized; for they will then be less liable to be deceived

by their superiors, or excited to insurrection and tumults, which always terminate against their own interest.

While we lament the degradation of the poor, we have little cause to be satisfied with the general refinement of the rich; they are slaves to the most contemptible passions, and, except in their manners, are hardly superior to their meaner dependants. They are, in many cases, equally the dupes of artifice and flattery, and little better qualified to judge for themselves; they are generally governed by the opinion of a few who mould them to their purpose, and if they can enjoy their pleasures and voluptuous delights; they care not who governs nor who obeys; they are equally destitute of public spirit and private virtue, and if vulgarity may be considered a characteristic of the mind, they are more vulgar than the lowest of the populace. The perpetual disguise which interest, custom, or politeness make it requisite for every man to put on in company, takes away considerably from the ease and comfort of mixed society; it is therefore only in friendly circles, where such are to be found, that the pleasures of rational conversation are ever enjoyed; for where all men are engaged in a struggle for the same object, it

*The Vices
The Rich*

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becomes a point of prudence to disguise as much as possible their sentiments, views, and tempers from each other. The great art of polite conversation is never to be serious, to make trifles agreeable, and to say a great deal about nothing. To penetrate through this disguise, and to see men as they are, is to know the world; it is the fruit of long experience, and of much observation. Without diminishing in any degree the restraints of politeness, or introducing that vulgar familiarity which people in low stations mistake for good breeding, I am anxious that they should proceed from a purer source than they do at present, and that deceit should not be the only motive for complaisance. The first principle of politeness is to consult the feelings of those with whom we converse, and to disguise our own when they are likely to give offence; such a conduct is not inconsistent with virtue, and as far from rudeness as from the artificial polish which disguises selfishness and ignorance.

*The first
principle
of politeness*

*in the
abolition of
old and
unnecessary
ceremonies*

Tho' it is much to be wished that no such stupid remnant of aristocratic distinction were to be found, as visits of ceremony, and that every vestige of useless restraint were banished from society, yet it is by no means requisite,

that the intercourse of men with each other should degenerate into the coarseness of a bear-garden, or that all the decencies and elegancies of life should be swept away by the rude hand of reform. The mind of man cannot always be employed on grave and serious subjects ; to trifle at times is not beneath his dignity, provided it be done with decency and good breeding, yet to be constantly bent on avoiding every thing serious, and cautious of delivering an opinion on common occasions, savors too much of that selfish concealment which destroys the confidence of social intercourse, and keeps men at a distance from each other. Men and women who are qualified for rational enjoyment, should meet together for that purpose, without disguise and without restraint ; they should interchange their ideas and amuse their minds, instead of merely retailing the stale topic of news, of talking agreeable nonsense, or gazing upon pieces of painted paper ; they should meet to become better acquainted with each other, and to be not only amused, but improved. The improvement of intellect, or advancement in knowledge, is the great purpose of rational beings, and without a constant approximation to it, all our time is mispent. Men are in

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general so ignorant, so selfish, and so vulgar, that in all this great world there are few who can truly esteem each other, for if knowledge, virtue, and integrity are the true foundations of esteem, it is not to be wondered, when these are found mixed in such small proportions in the human character, that even the meanest of mankind should entertain for their fellow-creatures hardly any feelings but those of contempt.

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The picture which has here been drawn of society may be said to be much overcharged in its colouring, and of too sombre a cast, to give a just idea of the original. Let it be remembered, however, that those who are mere spectators of the world, and reflect much on what they see and hear, without mixing in the busy crowd, are more likely to form a just estimate of the scene, than those who, being constantly amused or employed, have little leisure for reflection either on themselves or others. Their minds are too much and too constantly agitated, they are too much under the influence of early impressions, to take an extensive or impartial view of things, and therefore they have little idea, that those things to which they have been long accustomed, either can or ought to be otherwise than they are at present.

The distance and the separation which exist between the different ranks of society, are not evils so great as are the mode, the object, and the effect of the intercourse between those whom the laws of custom permit to meet together. The great object of man, however diversified by habits or institutions, is happiness, or the indulgence of his passions and appetites. In every age and country there has been some prevailing principle by which this purpose has been thought to be promoted; some nations have been warlike, others commercial, and others have acted under the influence of honor, patriotism, or religion; perhaps at no time was the love of virtue solely predominant, and most probably it never will be, tho' it is much to be desired that public and private interest could be brought to harmonize more amicably with each other. That union, however, seems very distant, for there never was a period when the pursuits of men were more grossly selfish, nor the influence of virtuous principles was less felt, than the present. All are looking to their own emolument,—to place, power, and riches,—all are impatient to outstrip each other in the great contest for wealth and pleasure. When men thus disposed, meet together, can their con-

*on the
prevailing
principles
to
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versation be either rational or improving? Impossible! A perpetual study to disguise their actual intentions, and to talk upon trifling subjects, is the first rule of conversation among all ranks. To begin with the metropolis, and descend to the meanest village in the country, there are very few instances in which it can be said that men derive much advantage from the company of each other. It is in London, if any where, that every kind of society is to be met with, and it is there in its best and its worst state; yet even in London there is little of that friendly intercourse, without which there can be no comfort in society, and hardly any thing in life worth possessing. Literary men, in every department of science, are daily to be met with, and he that wishes for information such as the most enlightened converse can impart, may find a rich repast for every day's enjoyment; yet this is not unalloyed with many serious evils, for among literary men, as among other men, there are jealousies, heart-burnings, and resentments; there is pride and vanity, and self-importance; there is a love of contention, a fondness of argument, and a desire to dazzle rather than to convince. In general, however, among men of talents, the greatest intellectual pleasures of conversation

*State of
London*

Literary Men

are to be found; for where good manners, good sense, and learning are united, with a desire to please, to give and to receive information, accompanied with a talent for pleasantry and humor, and where a confidence can be reposed in the opinions and integrity of those with whom we converse, there can surely be no greater gratification to a well-organized mind than such society; but real friendship is scarcely to be found. The great generally spend their time in one continued round of frivolous dissipation; among them, therefore, we are not to look either for instruction or pleasure to a rational mind; their conversation consists of nothing more than idle badinage, empty railery, or loose pleasantry. They seek not for information, or rather they reject it, and if a man does but know, by having acquired the fashionable stile of trifling, how to make his trifles agreeable, it is all that is required of him as a passport into what is called the best company. It would be well, however, if the communication of the higher ranks with each other consisted only in trifling, but trifling cannot always amuse, and they whose minds require some strong *stimulus* to give a relish to their enjoyments, if they are not inclined to good, must inevitably be doing ill. Gaming

*of the
great*

State of Society

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drinking, and intrigue, are sufficient to keep the minds of those in a state of perpetual irritation who have not formed a taste for rational pursuits; these, therefore, fill up the time, and furnish the means of society to many whose hours cannot be otherwise employed.

*Ladies
or
men*

Decency has forbid to women the indulgence of the second, but the two others seem to afford an ample compensation for the loss, and it will be rather difficult to find exceptions among women of fashion, to an immoderate indulgence in those most fatal propensities.—

*men of
fashion*

Even among these who are said to spend their time innocently, their hours of employment are only consumed in frivolous accomplishments, and their hours of amusement in thoughtless dissipation,—so little relish is there for rational society. The man of fashion of the present day is a listless, languid, contemptible being, who seems to enjoy nothing, and to care for no one but himself. He is a disgusting compound of vanity, affectation, and impertinence. To say and do the most rude things with an air of indifference, is a privilege allowed to the man who is either born in an elevated station, or has the good fortune to be admitted into what is called high life, and for this high honor it is not requisite to be well born, nor even

to be well educated ; it is sufficient to be completely worthless, to possess a certain portion of impudence, and to be known to a few of the most eminent fashionables, that is, people who can do any thing they please, and never please to do any thing they ought. Did I choose to descend to personal satire, I might name many persons, who, without one estimable quality, or even birth to recommend them, are permitted to figure in all the most fashionable circles, and to become the familiar companions of the great, with whom they live, mutually despising and despised.

The whole life of the great is a state of hostility to nature and reason ; they turn night into day, health into sickness, and summer into winter ; they spend the former in town, and the latter in the country. They are not satisfied with the seasonable productions of nature, but she must be forced and exhausted to gratify their pampered and fanciful appetites ; art is ransacked to supply them with variety, and when even wealth cannot purchase them a new pleasure, they sit down with weariness and disgust, to court the old ones drest in new forms, while the very phantom they pursue is perpetually flying before them, and eluding their grasp. Pleasure,

*The perverted
lives of
the great*

Stale of Society

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alas! they know but by name, for the pleasures of sense and vanity soon become stale and vapid, and their minds being unaccustomed to any other, they are unable to find enjoyment in virtue or in knowledge. The charms of nature in rural landscape, of society in rational conversation, or of solitude in pleasing contemplation, yield them no satisfaction; nothing but a perpetual succession of company (not to call it society), can preserve them from that most dreadful of all punishments, being left to themselves or their own families, for when connections are formed, as they generally are in high life, without any regard to congeniality of tempers or pursuits, can any thing be more distressing than a matrimonial *tete a tete*, or a family party. If they die a premature death in the midst of life and pleasure; if they linger out a wretched existence of pain and punishment; if they leave an unhealthy posterity the heirs of their diseases, and the victims of their debauchery, is it to be wondered at, or to be considered as the natural consequence of the false notions they have formed of enjoyment? No doubt, by their want of moderation, they shorten the duration and diminish the intensity of their pleasure. London, great, profligate, and in-

famous as it is, hardly feels more from the dissipation of the great, than the country; it suffers both from the want of them, and from their presence, for when they are there they corrupt their neighbors by their example, and when they are not there they drain the country of its wealth, and leave it nothing but poverty and ignorance. Should it be thought that I have said too much on the profligacy of the great, when there is so little hope of their amendment, it will not be denied that it is of infinite importance, tho' the efforts of philosophy are weak against the united force of fashion, habit, riches, authority, and luxury.

The vices and follies of the great are unfortunately not peculiar to themselves, for they descend in different degrees to their inferiors; so that it will be difficult to find, among any rank of people, that pleasant and improving intercourse which ought ever to be found among rational beings: for even those whose minds have received superior improvement are compelled, in their commerce with the world, to descend to the vulgar occupations of the generality, and if they do not wish to be thought pedantic, they must talk of horses, and scandal, and nonsense,—must drink and

*The vices of
the great
influence
those below
them*

State of Society

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play cards, and trifle, like the meanest fool in company. It is, indeed, hardly possible to conceive a more degraded state of society than that which is to be found in mixed companies, where form and ceremony are preserved during stated hours,—where cards and the bottle fill up the whole of the meeting, and the conversation is only upon topics that are general and indifferent. How can it be otherwise, when people meet merely to kill time? A dinner party is generally as stupid as a quaker's meeting, till the company begins to feel the inspiration of the bottle, and a rout is a mixed rabble, which the lady of the house endeavours to make as crowded as possible, for two very important reasons; the first is, to get them all over at once, and the next, to have it said that she gives larger parties than any lady of her acquaintance. Thus people meet together to stare at those they don't know, to talk nonsense with those they do, to lose their temper, their time, and their money, and this is called genteel society, but as to social intercourse, that is completely banished, if ever such a thing existed.—So much for the state of conversation, and I believe the picture is so far faithful that it is impossible for a rational mind to conceive any thing more degrading to ra-

tionality than what is called genteel society. In country towns and remote provinces, they are only the awkward imitators of more fashionable prattle.

Having now spoken of the state of conversation among the higher and middle ranks, I will offer a few remarks on their amusements and employments. The amusements of individuals, tho' they cannot always be serious and important, may at least be innocent, and worthy of rational beings; they should, therefore, neither be cruel nor vulgar. I doubt this cannot be said of those which fill up the time of the generality. Tho' balls are a ridiculous method of spending time, it is not to be inferred that dancing is the same, for when young people meet together to be gay and chearful, they naturally express that gaiety in more than common activity: dancing, therefore, without preparation, in the open air or in cool apartments, is a lively amusement and a wholesome exercise,—the latter it never can be in crowded ball-rooms, where the atmosphere is saturated with the effluvia of many hundred persons, not all of them healthy. To shew a fine dress, to look out for admiration, and to indulge a contemptible vanity, are the chief motives which take women to balls; to talk

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of the high
& middle
ranks of
Society,*

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Amusements
nonsense and dissipate their time, are the chief motives of the men ; such meetings, therefore, are neither useful nor harmless,—they enervate the mind without affording even innocent amusement, and fatigue the body without the good effects of exercise. Dancing was considered by the Romans as a meretricious art when set off with studied graces ; it is little better now, and should therefore be restrained to the theatre, where elegant attitudes and varied postures can alone be displayed with propriety, and where professional excellence is a veil for indelicacy.

*Public
amusem*
The love of public amusements is so strongly prevalent in the present age, that the performance, be what it will, is only a pretence for meeting together : it is a pity that the arts should be so treated, but it will not be otherwise till our youth of both sexes are better educated,—till they are taught to consider amusement inseparable from virtue, and even in their lightest sports to have a view to some useful purpose. *Music* Music, both vocal and instrumental, when it is calculated to interest the feelings, and to touch the heart, is a pleasing and innocent recreation ; what then can be more disgusting than to see the finest performances attended by a rude or insipid multitude,

who disturb the enjoyment of others, and feel none themselves. Our taste in this art has indeed somewhat degenerated, and execution, both in playing and singing, is more admired than melody and expression. Thus one of the great uses of music is lost, for when the ear or the eye is to be surprised, rather than the soul melted or elevated, with the various expressions of pathos, sweetness and grandeur, music, instead of an useful, becomes an insignificant art. The singer whose notes are the highest, not the sweetest, is now most admired, and the wonders, rather than the beauties of the art, are applauded. Fine singing, like rope-dancing, is more wonderful than pleasing, for the performer puts the audience in a perpetual state of anxiety. The music which pleases men of feeling, is to be preferred before that which pleases merely men of taste; the one can be understood by all, the other only by a few. Handel is the Milton of music; he is sublime, pathetic, and animating; he has genius, science, taste, harmony, and melody, and he who is not pleased with Handel, may profess to be a connoisseur, but his taste is little to be envied. Modern music is like modern poetry; it has no substance, no body, no matter in it; it is light and showy, but it

will not bear frequent repetition; it may please at first, but it cannot please long, which is the strongest proof that its merits are not solid.— Concerts, when well selected, and well performed, are an agreeable and an innocent amusement, to those who *are* amused, but as a mere refuge from idleness, they are only useful because they prevent, for the time at least, something worse. Whether gentlemen should perform in public, is a question which has often been debated, and can only be decided by fashion. When it becomes customary for gentlemen to do so, they may do it safely, for being among those things in which there is no moral turpitude, nor positive inconvenience, its propriety or impropriety must depend entirely on opinion; yet whether gentlemen should give up much of their time to music and musicians, is much more easily determined.

theatre. The theatre has been called by some the school of virtue, and by others the school of vice; this will, in a great measure, depend upon the manner in which it is conducted; at present, however, it may be justly called *The School of Folly*. If it has not the licentiousness of Congreve's time, it has not his vivacity and humor, and to a man of common

sense, it can hardly afford either instruction or entertainment. The perpetual thirst of the public for novelty is, in some measure, the cause of this degraded state of the stage, for when people will not be satisfied with nature, which is ever the same, tho' she takes different shapes, they must be content with the *Proteus* form of folly ; and content indeed they seem to be, if we are to judge from the fulness of the houses, and the applause with which the flattest nonsense is represented. Harlequin comedy, low farce, bombastic tragedy, pantomime, and sing song, have taken almost possession of the stage, to the exclusion of sense, nature, and humor. Bad plays and bad actors are all that a man who goes to the play-house to be amused, must expect to see ; till Shakespeare and nature revive, he had better stay at home, or go elsewhere. Whether the stage gives or receives the impression of the times, it is not easy to determine ; at present both are in need of being reformed.

The power of fashion over the conduct of life, is an evil sincerely to be lamented by every man who stands up for the prerogatives of reason and nature, for it is destructive of health, of morals, and of comfort, and tends only to the gratification of vanity. That the

*Power of
Fashion*

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whim or fancy of any individual, from his rank in society, should control and model the dress and amusements of a whole nation, is an infringement on their liberty, and an insult to their taste. The natural proneness of man to imitation, cannot be pleaded in defence of the custom, because it is not meant to deny nor to limit this imitative faculty in any thing which is sanctioned by reason or utility. Fashion is only to be condemned in things which are injurious or inconvenient, and where men submit to positive evil, merely for the sake of doing as others do, we must smile at the folly which deprives them of the power to act or think for themselves. The wish not to be thought ridiculous, prevents many a man from doing what his reason approves, and makes him persist in many things, for which no better reason can be given than that others do the same. For instance, it is the fashion to wear our clothes in winter so thin and unsuitable to the season, that persons of tender constitutions are in perpetual danger of destroying their health, or even risking their lives; shall fashion, in this case, decide against every other motive? Ridiculous weakness! No man who values his liberty or his reason, will submit to such a tyranny in this, or in any other such

instance. Fashion, perhaps, may induce us to eat or drink till nature is overloaded, and reason oppressed, and by frequent repetition, even health itself is sacrificed. Many a man has suffered for his slavish submission to the follies of others, and repented his weakness when repentance could be of no service. Such is the dominion of fashion over the female sex, that tho' the lightness of their dress perpetually exposes them to the attacks of consumption, and to be more suddenly consumed by fire, yet they had rather submit to the chance of these most dreadful calamities, than deviate in a single article from the strictest law of fashion or frivolity. These things would appear trifling, if their consequences were not serious, but when it is considered how many hundreds of our fair countrywomen yearly fall sacrifices to the tyranny of fashion, no weapon either of argument or ridicule should be suffered to remain idle, if it can be handled with effect to bring them back to a sense of reason and consistency. Whenever fashion is not inconsistent with reason or convenience, whenever novelty introduces something useful or agreeable into our dress, or our houses, let us embrace it with thankfulness, but never let us make ourselves ridiculous, or destroy our com-

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fort by adopting a fashion which neither suits our age, our persons, nor our health.

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present
state of
knowledge*

The state of knowledge, tho' considerably advanced within the last century, is yet far from that point at which it may one day arrive; the fictions and fancies of men are adopted in the room of truth, we even wander in a state of uncertainty as to some of the most common appearances of nature. The cultivation of the mind, without it embraces much useful information, is only specious ignorance; to know things as they exist in the natural and moral world is the end and object of all study; great progress has hitherto been made in this knowledge, but we are yet far from the end of our journey; clouds and mists of error yet hang over the minds of individuals,—they are mere children in understanding, the dupes of artifice, and the slaves of prejudice, in most things which concern even the common affairs of life, and much more so in those things which extend beyond the reach of vulgar apprehension, and so slow is the progress of the mind in forming correct ideas of this, that the wisdom of our ancestors is in many instances considered as folly—which gives room for perpetual innovations. The influence of a few cunning and artful men called statesmen, on the af-

fairs of the world, affords a lamentable proof of the ignorance and corruption of the generality of mankind. On no other subjects is there so much room for improvement in the mind of man as in those of religion and government.—The one is a system of imposture, the other of robbery. Till every man is enabled to judge for himself, and discern the truth in those things which belong to his station, the world can never be said to be completely civilized. Knowledge may be divided into two kinds, primary and secondary; the first is positively useful, the other only ornamental; the one consists in the exercise of reason, and shews things as they are, the other in that of imagination, and shews things that might be, the one relates to facts, the other to speculation; both are worthy the pursuit of intelligent beings, but each in its due proportion. The discovery of truth, on any subject whatever, is of more value to mankind than the richest conquest to any nation upon earth; for it forms a principle, an invariable guide for their future conduct, which, tho' individuals may neglect to employ, can never be lost to the world, and will enable them to act according to the relations of things, and to reject all the false opinions which have hitherto misled

Truth



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mankind. Men are, in general, so accustomed to follow the beaten track in all subjects, that few discoveries are made in any—and when they are, it is long, very long, before they are generally understood and acknowledged.

advantages Whether the relations of civil society, as
and at present established, are preferable to the
society state of wandering savages, is a question which admits of no doubtful decision; whether they are productive of all the happiness and intellectual improvement which society is capable of producing, may, in the opinion of many persons, not be so easily decided. That complete happiness is not within the reach of man, the experience of the world has proved beyond a doubt, and they who make it the immediate object of their pursuit, will find it to be a phantom which continually eludes their grasp, and yet such is our nature, that the indulgence of our sensual appetites will ever be our ultimate desire. Knowledge, or an accurate acquaintance with facts and opinions, has happily a more substantial form, which may be felt and embraced, and they who neglect to pursue it will be unhappy, so far as ignorance can make them; and the miseries of ignorance are, in a general sense, more severe than even those of poverty. The

ignorance of the multitude is the chief cause of their vices, and of the calamities they suffer from their superiors, of wars, seditions, of oppression, of famine, of slavery,—so much so, that the state of the world will never be materially improved till knowledge is more generally diffused, and the multitude are taught to act from a just sense of their own interest rather than from passion and prejudice.

The strongest argument against educating the children of the poor is, that it may tend to make them dissatisfied with their situation, and constantly aiming at a higher; had it this effect, it might justly be considered as dangerous and injudicious; but tho' this may be the case when knowledge is rare among that class, the effect will cease when it becomes more generally diffused, for knowledge, like every thing else, will in time find its level, and go for no more than it is worth. Some few instances there are of superior minds, by the help of a little knowledge, rising from a humble situation to the most elevated, and this is one great advantage of such instruction; but the principal good it produces, is to enable the generality of them to spend their leisure time more rationally and comfortably than many do at present, from their unlettered and savage

*Education
of the poor
advantages*



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ignorance. Let it then never be objected, that it can be dangerous for any set of men to understand their duty and their interest; it may be to those who wish to make them their dupes, but no man who is properly enlightened can ever be the dupe of any individual, or any party.

*the State of
the poor*

The state of the poor in all countries that have been long civilized, is a subject which calls loudly for enquiry and amendment; the indifference of the rich to their condition, merits the severest reparation, for tho' they roll in luxury and pomp, they think of them without anxiety or compassion, pining in their miserable dwellings without attendance in sickness, or comfort in health. To see them in their wretched hovels, hardly covered with their filthy rags, and hardly kept alive on the meanest and the coarsest food, while riot, waste, and expence are the boast of their wealthy superiors, who preach to them of patience, gratitude, and forbearance, is a problem which a man of common faculties can hardly solve, without being guilty of what is called impiety. There is, indeed, a spurious kind of charity which shews itself in public subscriptions, where ostentation and vanity have a greater share than benevolence; by this, the

poor are in some measure relieved, but it is not connected with any principle which tends radically to improve their condition, or give them a better place in society. It has always been common with persons in all ranks of life above the condition of poverty, to speak contemptuously of the poor, considering their vices not as the effects of their situation, but of their nature. Such people should rather wonder that so many of the poor are as virtuous as they are with all their privations, and all their temptations.

Coarse selfishness is the leading principle of the world, not that refined self-love which is pleased by giving pleasure to others, but the mere gross indulgence of our appetites and passions, society, therefore, so far from being what it might be, is at best but a state of disguised hostility. To make it otherwise, men must be taught to consider how they can make others happy as well as themselves. They must enquire and reflect how their conduct affects both the individuals. The generality of mankind, it will be said, have not time to enquire; to this it may be answered, that the mere exertion of their reason on common topics, requires no more time than is given to learn the tedious articles of establish-

*the necessity
for cultivation
liberal
sentiment*

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ed error, for truth is simple and uniform. To be content with things as they are, without examining whether they are right or wrong, is a proof either of a very limited intellect, or a pitiful disposition, for no man existing, be his station what it may, is exempted from the duty of enquiring what good he can do to others. Such an enquiry naturally leads men of fortune and talents, in their different degrees, to consider how far it is in their power to increase the pleasures, or diminish the distresses of their fellow-creatures. That man must have seen little of mankind who is ignorant of human misery, yet such knowledge is not to be acquired by those who converse merely with persons of their own rank ; they must enter into the cottages and garrets of the poor,—they must see them, naked, hungry, and thirsty, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather, to the sudden attacks or the slow wastings of disease ; they must see the effects of their unruly passions, and their grovelling vices, they must be acquainted with all the consequences of ignorance and poverty. Evils like these must be known before they can be remedied, yet the generality of the upper ranks know little what their inferiors suffer,—they are little influenced either by

reason or imagination ; custom is their only guide, and interest their only motive ; they glide along, in the stream of life, doing as they see others do, and therefore thinking they do right ; they are dead to those pleasures which arise from the exercise of the social affections, tho' they live in the full crowd of society, and boast of being acquainted with what they call the world ; but to know the world as they know it, is to be ignorant of mankind ; to keep good company is all they profess, and to move an inch out of that line is said to be affecting singularity. Religion has taught them something about certain imaginary beings who have no personal or even spiritual existence, but it is a sort of knowledge which has no influence upon their lives, except to make them think ill of those who believe otherwise. They know little about the real state of things, or their true relations to beings who have an actual existence ; they are therefore mere *automata*, mere creatures of habit and fashion, without feeling, thought, or reflection. The generality of men think too little ; there are others who think too much, they are too apt to despise the world, and thus lose many of its pleasures ; such men are useful by calling the thoughtless

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now and then to reflection, but their lot is by no means enviable. Those who wish to enjoy the world, should not think much about it, for it will not bear reflection.

Competence To a benevolent and thinking man, nothing is more pleasant than the idea of plenty. To know that he has enough for himself and family, and to let others partake of it without injuring his property, or entrenching upon his desire to accumulate, cannot fail of affording the utmost satisfaction. To such a man, the idea of want must be dreadful, he knows, therefore, how to pity those who have hardly sufficient for their daily subsistence—and tho' it happens from the inevitable necessity of things, or according to others, by the ordinance of God, which says that "the poor shall never cease out of the land," yet it must be every good man's wish, that the number of these should be as small as possible. One means of lessening poverty is to lessen waste; I consider waste as a very great crime, for it does nobody good, and it does a great deal of harm both to those who make it, and to those who suffer by it. In the conduct of life there are many little things not much thought of which go to make up the character of a truly good man, and of these nothing is more essential than a tender

regard for other people's property far beyond the bounds of common honesty. There are many who pass in the world for very good sort of people, people who would neither cheat nor steal, and yet would never scruple to waste the property of others with the most thoughtless indifference ; by these people, great is the waste committed at inns and other places of public resort, they knock about, they spoil and abuse without the smallest compunction, what if saved and preserved might do much good, and be the means in the aggregate of sustaining many useful and respectable beings, and thus, I will not say the designs of providence are frustrated, because it would be a poor compliment to providence to say that man could frustrate his designs, but the bounty of nature becomes misapplied. It is a good maxim therefore to teach young persons to be as careful of other people's property as they should be of their own. It is also of great consequence to impress upon the minds of youth, the necessity of calculating before hand, every thing they undertake. Nothing shews so much awkwardness of mind as a want of calculation, and by calculation I mean not merely the knowledge of pounds, shillings, and pence, but the fitness of means for their ends, of persons and

and by so doing, they hold out inducements to them to marry, with the prospect of having their families maintained by the public. That which they cannot do for themselves, the public cannot do for them, and without increasing the stock of provisions annually raised in the country, in proportion to the increasing numbers of the people, it is impossible to banish poverty from the world, but this, according to the grand fundamental principle of nature, is impossible, for their increase can never be proportionate to each other, To keep population down to a level with the means of subsistence, and raise wages in proportion to the price of provisions, is the great secret for providing for the poor, and whoever exerts himself to this purpose, whether actively or theoretically, is doing a service to mankind, for which future ages will bless him. To limit the accumulation of property, and its too small division, and to prevent the lower ranks from multiplying too fast, are the most likely means of effecting this great purpose, and are consistent in every country with a very numerous population. To give employment to the poor is the best use of riches, and to give them advice how to become industrious and frugal, is the best use of superior knowledge, to con-

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vince them that labor is the best sort of property, to persuade them to avoid marriage till they can maintain a family, and to live continently till they can afford to marry, will do more to improve their condition than volumes of divinity, or thousands spent in parish allowance. No man in the middle ranks of society ever thinks of marrying till he has a probability of living comfortably, and why should not the poor be taught to acquire the same foresight? Even the birds of the air have nests, but the poor very often have hardly food or clothing for their young. It is degrading to human nature that man alone should be regardless of his offspring. Some pious people, from a foolish reliance on providence, have promoted this thoughtless tendency to propagate, but it should be more properly called tempting providence than trusting in him. When providence furnishes the means of being comfortable, they who think it right, are in the right to be thankful to him; but to trust in him, without using the common rules of prudence, is either to defy his power, or to rely on him without sufficient ground of reliance. It reminds one of the old fable of Jupiter and the waggoner.

*To create,
distribute,
enjoy,
and use of human
enjoyments,*



To produce, to distribute, and to enjoy, make

up the sum of human existence; when these are divided in their due proportions to every member of society, it will have attained, most probably, its utmost possible state of excellence. This division was perhaps more properly apportioned in this country before the late war, than in any other at any period of the world; but things have been thrown much out of their course by that unfortunate convulsion, and it will be some time before they are settled. A considerable alteration has taken place within the last ten years among all ranks, in their dress, manners, and mode of living; every thing is changed from solid to shewy,—every thing is sacrificed to outward appearance,—all live to the extent of their income; more money is circulated, and less is hoarded; the returns of trade are quicker, and tradesmen are more numerous. The capital of the country is no doubt increased; but it is not from this circumstance alone that people live more expensively, but because they live more for the present time, and are less anxious about posterity. All are eager to get money, and striving to out-do each other in shew and expence; hence the numerous and extravagant speculations in trade, which terminate in ruin and poverty. The prevailing vice of the age is

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extravagance, the example has been given by the government, and it has extended to the lowest ranks. The virtues of prudence and œconomy are almost extinct, all ranks are fond of shew and expence, and this propensity, if not checked, must lead to the ruin of all moral principle. The ceremonious politeness and genuine hospitality of former times is out of fashion, and, in short, the whole manner of living is less substantial than formerly. Good breeding used to consist in a delicate attention to the feelings of others; it seems now to consist in nothing but being at ease, and totally disregarding every thing but ourselves. By this change we gain a great degree of freedom, but it is a freedom which is in danger of degenerating into a rude and unpolished barbarism. Attempts have been made and are making to effect a revolution in literary taste, as complete as that which has taken place in our dress and furniture. Pope, Addison, Akenside, and Gray, are degraded to the rank of mere versifiers, without genius, or originality.

Cheap and simple pleasures are not the fashion of the present age; men are not admired for what they are, but for what they possess, and it is not society that is sought

*The
interesting
tale of
society.*

after, so much as being in company. To be impartial, however, we must allow, that if dress is less solid, it is more simple ; if manners are less ceremonious, they are less formal ; and if our pleasures are more frivolous, they are also less gross than those of our ancestors ; whether we are equally improved in our moral and political attainments, I will not venture hastily to determine. General principles of knowledge, however, are more widely diffused, and more accurately understood, than at any former period ; experiment has taken place of theory, intellectual science has rapidly advanced, and literature has got rid of many incumbrances. The improvements of chemistry have increased the comforts and conveniences of life, and all the arts are proportionably extended, but above all, the empire of reason has been considerably enlarged ; for as it was the boast of Socrates to have brought philosophy down from heaven to reside on earth, so it is the boast of the present age to have brought religion to the test of reason, and submitted faith to morality. And yet, notwithstanding that the more intelligent part of society have received considerable improvement by this important change, it cannot be denied that those who never think for them-

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selves, and take opinions upon trust, have been no gainers by their neglect of religious principles. Men must either refine their selfish appetites, or act from an imaginary motive of future good, and it has unfortunately happened that they have rejected religion without embracing philosophy, and therefore they had better have remained in the old belief; for it cannot be denied, that tho' the hope of an uncertain futurity is no very rational motive of action, it is with some men, at least, a powerful one, and more refined than that of a mere immediate interest. The decline of religion, among all ranks of those who have adopted no substitute in its room, is a serious evil, and threatens the peace of society. The higher ranks, as they are less religious, have become more regardless of their health, their character, and their fortune; in the height of their prosperity they have no guide of their lives to direct them to acts of charity and benevolence, and in affliction they have no comforter to soothe or soften their calamity. The middle ranks have lost that decent sobriety of conduct which preserved them within the line of moderation and œconomy, and the poor are nearly loosened from all those restraints which taught them their duty to their superiors, and

to be content with the fruits of their own industry. They are more headstrong, more profligate, and more insolent, than at any former period, and tho' there is no doubt that all the relative duties of society may be as well taught and performed on the principles of a pure morality, as on those of any religion whatever, yet when neither of these motives are allowed to operate, the general state of society must be alarmingly disturbed, and this evil can only be remedied by the more general diffusion of knowledge.

The improvement of the people in the present advanced state of the world must no longer be trusted to governments; all that they have now to do is to leave the press free and unrestrained; let them not interfere with education, information, or trade; the ball of knowledge is now set in motion, and it will roll on till it has completed the circumference of the globe, unless it be impeded by external force, and all will go as well as it can, when priestcraft and state-craft cease to trouble the affairs of the world. The progress of improvement is slow and imperceptible, for even they who are the instruments of it are seldom conscious of the good they promote, and they who never reason themselves are not proof against the

*on the progress
of improvement?*

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reason of others. The distinction of family, unsupported by any other claim, has lost its value in the opinion of the world, and riches have taken its place in society. The tales of the nursery are no longer calculated to terrify, and the stories for children are both amusing and instructive. The improvements of agriculture, tho' perhaps carried in some respects beyond the bounds of utility, have contributed greatly to improve the condition of the farmers, but the custom of letting large farms is injurious both to population and comfort, and has introduced a degree of luxury and dissipation among farmers utterly inconsistent with their situation, and as injurious to their landlords as to themselves.

utility
the new
system of
education

The new system of education has diffused the elements of knowledge more generally among the poor. I will not say that they have as yet been materially improved by it, for to read and write is of little use except as the means of forming the mind to prudence and virtue. Mere knowledge is not education, but the knowledge of what is good; such knowledge as leads to the practice of sobriety, industry, and œconomy, and teaches them their duty as well as their rights, what they owe to their superiors and their superiors to them, from their

mutual dependence. The principles of morality as arising from the general relations of society, and the British constitution, ought to form a part of the instruction of all public seminaries from the highest to the lowest.

The pleasures and advantages which society, *no revolution*
 even in its present state affords, are so many *shd be*
 and valuable as not to be rashly endangered *sudden*
 for the whim or passion of any individual. No revolution but that which arises from the gradual change of habits and sentiments can be desirable; a revolution which subverts in a moment the ancient customs, institutions, and prejudices of a people, is in danger of producing anarchy, and ending in despotism; the history of the two greatest revolutions that ever happened in the world, those of England in 1649, and of France in 1792, justify what is here affirmed. Let every man, who complains of evils, speak only from the result of his knowledge in human affairs, and mistrust all theory which is not sanctioned by experience; he ought to have seen what he laments, or heard from the testimony of the sufferers, their miseries and their grievances, and then, what he relates should be related with coolness and candor, with no desire to exaggerate or to inflame, but merely to inform, to enlighten and

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improve. It is no small thing that we enjoy in security the fruits of our industry and the inheritance of our ancestors, the varied pleasures afforded by nature and art, by literature, science, and conversation, the charms of music, statuary, and painting, the delights of distant correspondence, the convenience of travelling with ease and safety, the still greater pleasure of witnessing the prosperity of our friends, and anticipating their future advancement. These are comforts which no virtuous man could wish to see endangered for a moment, by any rash attempts at innovation and reform. On the other hand, such a man who has one honest purpose steadily before him, will not be diverted from it by the false alarms of the selfish or the timid, he will be conscious that morality admits not of many means to effect the same end, and that the only method of producing good to society is that of sober discussion and argument; he will endeavour, therefore, rather to amend than to destroy, and considering that civilized society, even with all its defects, is the produce of ages, he will rather seek to correct the evil it contains, than to tear up the evil and the good together.

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olives will*

The intention and tendency of what has been here said will not, I trust, be mistaken, for

to be mistaken

tho' there is a great propensity in mankind to exaggerate what they do not comprehend, and when a thing does not exactly meet their approbation, to make it appear in a light which it does not deserve, yet it can hardly be supposed that the remarks here offered are directed against society in general, or even against those evils which seem to be inseparable from the condition of human nature. The great art of life is to distinguish, for want of which men are perpetually in error and at variance with each other. It is of great importance, to discriminate between those evils which are temporary and casual, and those which are essentially connected with the nature of things. It is for this purpose that I have written; for being fully and firmly of opinion that many of the miseries which at present shorten and disturb our existence, are capable of being removed by the exertion of our reason, I have ventured to suggest to the consideration of thinking and benevolent men, the probable source of many of the evils which exist in the world, that by frequently revolving these things in their minds, they may endeavor, by moral melioration and political improvement, to lessen the load of human calamity, to in-

THE PRINCIPAL MORAL WRITERS
AND SYSTEMS OF MORALITY
CONSIDERED AND
COMPARED.

M^{Moral. de fin}ORALITY is the science which teaches men their duty to themselves and to each other, and, without depreciating the value of the rest, it may be justly affirmed, that none is more excellent than morality, for as the knowledge of our true interest is the surest means of happiness, that wisdom must be far above all other, which teaches us to enjoy the blessings of life, and to mitigate its calamities. ^{Consid. Super. the Sci}
The most complete acquaintance with the operations of nature is not to be compared with a knowledge of the human mind and the great duties of morality, tho' the former is by no means to be neglected in the search after happiness, for as the comforts of life contribute in no small degree to its enjoyment, the pursuits of natural and experimental philosophy which have increased and extended these comforts, are to be taken into the estimate of useful

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acquirements. It is of the first importance that we faithfully discharge the relative duties of parent, child, and citizen, and so far as a knowledge of the uses and properties of nature, by qualifying us for any useful employment, contributes to this purpose, so far it deserves our attention and regard. These remarks are premised to teach us how to appreciate the value of different sciences, and to place in its proper light, the merit of that which it is here proposed to consider. Without duly understanding the nature of what we intend either to study or perform, we are in danger of being perpetually misled by an appearance of utility, and of giving an unjust preference to things of comparatively small importance; it is from hence only that we see so many men engaged in trifling and vicious pursuits, or wasting their time in fruitless researches, and that the great end of our nature, and the principal means of our happiness, are so frequently misconceived.

*the subject
respects.*

Morality being the study which, for its practical uses, most deserves our attention, it will not, I trust, be deemed a useless or unprofitable employment, either to myself or others, if I attempt to estimate the relative merits of the principal moralists, and systems of mo-

rality, by comparing them together, with a
 view to enable those who have leisure and
 talents to judge for themselves, to adopt the
 best motives and the best rules for their con-
 duct in society. The most eminent moral *moral writ*
 writers may be divided into three sorts, viz.— *divided in*
 those who have given their advice in precepts, *3 classes*
 apologues, and treatises,—those who have en-
 quired into the foundations of morality and
 the nature of man,—and those who have united
 these different methods together. The sources *the sources*
 of morality are not difficult to be discovered, *of morality*
 even by those who look for them independent
 of any divine communication; they are to be
 found in our mutual wants and dependencies,
 and the progress of that stream which has its
 origin in our common nature, may be easily
 followed thro' all the mazes of society, in its
 advances from rudeness to refinement. In mor-
 als as in criticism, and in every other branch
 of knowledge, the practice will be found to
 have gone before the theory, for men feel an
 impulse to action before they have leisure to
 reason upon their motives. Homer wrote his
 Iliad, before Aristotle published his Treatise
 on Poetry, and moral actions arising from a
 sense of their utility, must have preceded mor-
 al precepts. Men forming by degrees just

*That
 practice
 precedes
 theory.*

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notions of virtue, delivered their advice to others, in the humble form of precepts and apologues, for in the infant state of society, where the wants, possessions, and relations of men, are few, their laws and their morality must be plain and simple. As the former multiply, the latter also increase, and in process of time, men of leisure and talents forsaking the sententious brevity of maxims, and the concealed wisdom of fables, have at different times, by a severer application of their faculties, endeavored to strengthen the obligations of morality by an appeal to the reason of their fellow-creatures, and by accurate observations on the conduct of man, to point out to him his nature, his duty, and his interest. Others again, without any mixture of metaphysical disquisition, have detailed the practical duties of life, in essays and treatises of various lengths, or blended the three together. Whatever degree of credit these different writers may have obtained from individuals or the public, and whatever effect they may have had in teaching men to regulate their conduct, it is certainly in some measure a reproach to human reason, that no system has ever been adopted by a whole people, or acquired much celebrity in the world, without the aid of

mystery and miracles, so much do men require to be allured by something supernatural, which they do not comprehend. To the first division of these writers I have no hesitation in saying we are the most indebted; for they who set before us, from the result of their experience, plain and simple precepts, or employ the imagination as an instrument of instruction in the formation of concise parables or fables, or even they who expatiate on the relative duties of life, in practical treatises, certainly contribute more to the happiness of society than they who indulge themselves in metaphysical speculations, in which the vanity of supporting a system is often more concerned, than the desire of doing good. There is no doubt, that the great variety of theories which have been invented on the origin of our duty, have rather tended to mislead and bewilder the minds of men, than to furnish them with forcible motives to the practice of virtue, for most of these theories have been rather the produce of a subtle invention, than the result of actual experience; their authors have first supposed men to act from certain motives, and then endeavored, with the unnatural violence of Procrustes, to accommodate the origin of all human actions to their own standard.

precepts preferred

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which have
obtained.*

the nature of our faculties and motives, which forms a considerable portion of the pleasure which an inquisitive and rational mind is capable of receiving. Whether all men will become practically better for such studies may be disputed, but that they ought, admits not of a doubt, for surely the custom of reflecting deeply on the frailty of our nature, on the limited operation of our faculties, and our state of mutual dependence, should teach us to act from motives of kindness and benevolence, superior to the gross considerations of low self-interest, or distant reward.

The most eminent of those who have given precepts for the conduct of mankind, among the ancients, are Confucius, Moses, Solomon, the author of Ecclesiasticus, Pythagoras, Socrates, Seneca, Jesus Christ, and his disciples. Among the moderns, Rochefoucault, the *Œconomy of Human Life*, and Dr Franklin. Numerous are the writers of fables and apologues, both in ancient and modern times, but *Æsop* is the best of the ancient fabulists, and *Gay* of the modern. The best treatises of morality are those of *Epictetus*, *Plutarch*, *Antoninus*, *Montaigne*, *Bacon*, *Charron*, *La Bruyere*, *Addison*, *Johnson*, and *Knox*. The ancients united speculation with practical morality more

The most eminent preceptor moralis

the best treatises

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than the moderns, and there is hardly any ancient philosopher who, after delivering those opinions on the nature of the supreme good, and the soul of man, which formed the distinction of his sect, did not endeavor to prove the excellence of his principles, by the precepts which he laid down as their consequence. Modern philosophers, on the contrary, are chiefly speculative moralists, for in the writings of Hobbes, Shaftesbury, Locke, Hume, Helvetius, and Stewart, there is not to be found one word of practical advice; others, however, have united metaphysical enquiry with moral precept, and have taught mankind not only the nature, but the rules of virtue. Paley, St Lambert, and de la Metherie, are therefore more useful writers than the dry metaphysicians abovementioned, and they deserve to be perpetually read and admired for their curious enquires and useful morality.

*speculative
moralists*

*practical
moralists*

*The Chinese
fusius*

The Chinese are a people much talked of, and very little known. It has been their policy to keep themselves separate from all other nations, and their language has not a little contributed to this purpose, for very few people have attempted to understand it.— Their antiquity is now acknowledged to be far beyond that of the Mosaic chronology; Con-

fucius wrote above five hundred years before Moses ; I have, therefore, in opposition to the vulgar prejudice, placed him before the Jewish law-giver. To the zeal and industry of a Jesuit we are indebted for an accurate knowledge of this great philosopher. Father Couplet, in the year 1687, published a complete translation into Latin, of three of his four books, with a learned preface, and a copious commentary ; by him we are informed, that the French Jesuit missionaries in China could make no progress in converting the people without a knowledge of their literature and language ; they therefore applied themselves to these studies, and found that, by the knowledge of about five or six thousand letters, or words, they were able to translate many of their books, and to convince the Chinese, by that means, of the conformity between Christianity and the precepts of Confucius. The cautious Jesuit, in his researches after the antiquity of the Chinese, treads upon very dangerous ground, tho' he labors hard to prove, that they must have derived all their knowledge of the Deity from one of the sons of Noah. Let this, however, be as it may, there is no doubt that they believed in one Supreme Being, and that they were early in-

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structed in a very wise system of policy, and a very pure system of morality. It has been sagely remarked, that a nation can only be well governed when kings are philosophers, or philosophers are kings, and this has happened to no nation more than to the Chinese ; for not only their kings, but all their great ministers of state, were philosophers. Confucius himself had served in very high offices, and it appears that he applied himself very strictly to the study of philosophy, both before he came into power, and after he had quitted a public, for a contemplative life. He kept a school of philosophy, in which he is said to have had above three thousand disciples, five hundred of whom were appointed to high offices in the government. No man was ever held in greater veneration, nor more deservedly ; the chief objects of his philosophy were to dissipate the mists of error, to increase the cultivation of reason, to teach wisdom, justice, and humanity. His first precept is, “ to cultivate and polish that natural reason, which is the gift of heaven, and without which cultivation or knowledge of the true nature of things, we neither can manage ourselves, our families, nor the state,” and this will apply, in different degrees, from the lowest peasant to the king

precepts

upon the throne. His first book is chiefly *His 14 Books* addressed to kings, and contains much excellent advice on the manner in which they ought *addressed to Ruler.* to govern themselves, and the people with whose happiness they are entrusted. Page 13, he particularly enforces that self-examination by which a man may be convinced of the purity of his intentions, of that desire of what is right, and that aversion to evil, which are the very elements of morality. Having now spoken of his philosophy in general, I will give the most remarkable parts in terms as concise as possible.

“ The great science of princes consists in improving and cultivating their reason ; it consists also in renovating and reforming the people by their example and advice ; it consists in choosing and firmly persisting in what is good. After any man has acquired this state of mind, it is impossible for him to be disturbed either by prosperity or adversity.” “ To make much of little things, and little of great ones, is neither consistent with reason nor prudence.” In the basin of king Tolu it was written, “ Wash and renew thyself every day.”—An exhortation to perpetual self examination. “ The king can hear and decide causes, but the best thing he can do is to persuade the people, by

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mutual love and indulgence, to avoid litigation." "To what purpose is dissimulation. What a man is in himself, that he will in the end appear to other people." "Riches adorn a house, but virtue adorns the man." "An honest heart makes an open countenance." "All immoderate passions are deviations from that rectitude which is the great rule of living." "A man in love cannot see the faults of his beloved; an avaricious man cannot see the fertility of his own fields." "A kingdom is but a large family." "A good king loves his people as a mother loves her new-born child." "As one rash word will spoil the greatest affairs, so the single example of the king regulates and strengthens a whole kingdom." "A good king will exact from others only what he performs himself." "A king who is not good cannot propagate goodness, and he that is wicked to himself cannot be good to others." "To govern a kingdom rightly, he must first govern well his own family." "He only is a wise and good king who knows how to love men and how to hate them." "A wise king, who is a lover of his people, will desire to see them rich rather than himself; but a cruel and wicked one will delight only in his own riches, tho' at his people's expence."—His second book

treats chiefly on the golden law of mediocrity. *His P. M.*
 "A prudent man," says he, "always pre-relates &
 serves the medium; but a foolish one goes mediocrity
 above or below it; the vulgar seldom preserve
 it; but this is no new thing; it is an old com-
 plaint, and the cause of it is, that some think
 themselves too wise, and others not wise
 enough."

"The Chinese Annals relate, that the Em-
 peror Xun used to hang a large tablet in the
 front of his palace, in which he invited the
 people to write his faults." "A prudent man
 will be content with his lot; if he is rich he
 will not give himself up to luxury and unlaw-
 ful pleasures, nor offend others by his pride
 and arrogance; if he is poor he will still be
 honest." "A prudent man is like a good
 archer, if he errs from his mark, he will en-
 deavor to find out the reason." "The Em-
 peror Xun acquired celebrity by his vir-
 tues, which extended even to his parents; in
 dignity he was the son of heaven, and his fame
 descended to his posterity." "Let a man be
 ever so ignorant, if he wishes and desires to
 learn, and is not fatigued with the study of
 virtue, he may arrive at the highest degree
 of wisdom." "Be careful how you behave
 yourself in your own house, do nothing there

you would wish them to be towards you.”—
 “When I first set out in life I gave credit to men for their words, I will now only believe them when their words and their actions correspond.” “Tho’ we ought to hate the wicked for their crimes, yet if they repent sincerely, we should embrace them as if they had never sinned.” “I blush for and abhor the smoothness of flatterers, for nothing is so indispensable in the commerce of men, as sincerity.” “There is nothing that I so ardently wish as that the old should be respected, that equals should have confidence in each other, and that those who are weak from age, from infirmity, or poverty, should be cherished and supported.” “The good of the whole human race is my wish.” “Simplicity of manners should be accompanied by simplicity of dress and ornament.” “The sanctity, the charity, the piety, which I require, is an even and regular disposition of mind, consistent with reason, which rejecting every narrow and selfish consideration, embraces the whole world, and when this becomes universal, all men will be but like one family, and the whole globe connected by one band of harmony.” “Let us love others no less than ourselves, let us measure them by ourselves and estimate

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their labors and pleasures by our own.”—
“I was not born with wisdom, but from my earliest years was studious of antiquity, and giving much time and diligence to study, I obtained the knowledge with which I am endowed.” “If I walk with two men at the same time, I will derive instruction from both; for example, if the one is a bad, and the other a good man, I will imitate the virtues of the one, and correct my own vices by the vices of the other.” “Two things are requisite in the government of a state,—to do nothing rashly, and not to attend too minutely to trifles; for by the first you will do many things without consideration, and by the last you will often neglect things of great moment.” “A prudent man will agree with all men, so far as is consistent with reason, but not so as to court the multitude; a foolish man will identify himself with the people, without choice or selection, so that he will neither be consistent with reason nor justice.” “The ancients studied wisdom on their own account for the fruits they derived from it; the moderns for interest or vain applause.” “I detest a man who is pertinacious and obstinate in his opinion, and yet on the first threat or attack of public commotion, shrinks from his sen-

timents, and no longer speaks of reforming the morals of the people, or redressing their grievances." Page 105. "Some one may ask, Ought we to return injury with kindness? I answer, as far as justice requires, let injuries be punished, but let benefits always be requited." "Is there one word by which a man may direct his whole life? Do to others what you wish them to do to you." "Do the multitude hate a man, let him be examined. Do they love him, let him be examined." "Three things are to be avoided by him who is a follower of virtue; in youth, lust; in middle life, ambition; and in old age, avarice." "Men are by nature united, by different manners and pursuits they are separated." "Men who are determined to rise in the world will stop at nothing mean, base, and contemptible, which can further their purpose." "The tongue is the index of the heart, and what the latter thinks cannot always be concealed, &c."

To form a just estimate of the merits of Confucius as a moralist, we must consider the time and country in which he lived, for tho' we do not find in him much that can be called new, we are to remember, that it was new when it was written, and so new that nothing of the same kind had gone before it. He was

*an Estimate
of his System
of Confucius*

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perhaps the earliest teacher of morality from whom we have any written precepts, and when it is understood how little has been added to them by modern improvement, we are either to consider him as a man of the most profound meditation, or that the great duties of morality, are in all civilized countries nearly the same. Tho' China has always been, and is yet, in a manner separated from all other countries by her language and her policy, yet we find there, the same relations of life, the same ranks, and the same employments as in other nations; the maxims of morality are therefore nearly the same, and it is not to be wondered if there is so little difference between the precepts of Confucius and those of later moralists. They arrest the attention and the memory by their conciseness, and by their sublime purity engage the understanding and the heart, and what is more remarkable, the disciples of Confucius are yet numerous, after the lapse of four thousand years since he lived.

The Bible The Bible is one of the oldest books in which a system of morality is united with a system of theology. Having no prejudice in favor of the latter, which represents the Deity as jealous, vindictive, and cruel, I will proceed to examine its moral precepts, freely and im-

partially, and endeavor to decide how far they are calculated to promote the purpose for which they were intended. The notions which Moses entertained of one supreme, indivisible Being, seem to have been acquired in Egypt where God was worshipped under the name of *or, or, o m*, a term originally applied to the Sun. V. Diod. Sic. vol. I. Whether the Egyptians had begun to spiritualize their worship before the time of Moses or not, is doubtful; it is certain, however, that Moses, tho' he ceased to worship the Sun and other heavenly bodies, had not conceived the idea of a Being wholly spiritual, for he continually represents the Deity as having a bodily form, and even ascribes to him human passions and frailties.—The God of Moses is a jealous God, a God of anger, of vengeance, and resentment, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. v. *Exod.* c. xx. v. 5.

The account which the Bible gives of the origin of natural and moral evil, in the history of Adam and Eve, is supposed by many to be allegorical, and such a supposition is wisely entertained by those who wish to form exalted notions of the Deity. Murder is the first crime forbidden by God himself, an injunction con-

*on the story
of Adam &
Eve*

*Murder
denounced*

ancestors not "as patterns to imitate, but as examples to deter." JUNIUS.

Noah, after having planted the vine, was the *Noah's* first to abuse the fruits of it, for he got drunk, *inconsistently* and exposed himself to the ridicule of his family. To shew, however, that he had a sense of his criminality, he vented the heaviest imprecations of vengeance and malice against the son who had been the witness of his shame, vide *Gen. ix. 21, 25.* The adultery of Abraham was sanctioned by his wife, *Gen. xii. v. 13.* *adultery sanctioned by his wife* tho' adultery at that time was considered as a crime; for Abimelech reproved Abraham severely for having put him in danger of committing that crime by calling his wife his sister, *Gen. xx. v. 9.* The daughters of Lot *the men who* were with child by their father; for after they *conduct of* had tempted him to drink wine, they then *Lot's daughter* tempted him to commit incest, *Gen. xix. 31.* Abraham was not satisfied with Hagar alone, but had many other concubines, *Gen. xxv. 6.* Jacob, instructed by his mother Rebecca, defrauded his brother Esau of his father's blessing, *Gen. xxvii.* The treachery of Laban to Jacob is fully recorded in the xxixth of *Gen.* and the craft of Jacob towards Laban in return, may be found in the xxxth.

We are now to examine the moral laws and

*more
moral
code
described*

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*The
#Command*

precepts of Moses, who laid claim to the sanction of divine authority for all that he taught and commanded. Of the ten commandments, which are the foundation of Jewish morality, six only are strictly moral, the four first are purely religious, five of them are founded on a basis which even time itself can never destroy, and four of them are capable of being enforced by punishments which, to a certain degree, will secure their performance, the sixth is addressed only to the *minds* of men, and as our thoughts are neither the subject of cognizance nor punishment, it is a benevolent, tho' too frequently an unavailing precept. The laws of morality do not in all cases require nor admit of aid from the laws of the land. The relative duties of life, such as are comprehended under the precept of "Honor thy father and thy mother," cannot be enforced by law; it is only the grosser violations of justice and humanity for which the legislator can enact punishment; he may declare his sentiments, but he cannot compel obedience. In forbidding to kill, to steal, or bear false witness, he is armed with the power of enforcing his commands: where punishment alone is required, he can punish, but he cannot reward, that must be left to the feelings of each man's con-

science and the approbation of the world. The system of Moses, however, is a system of penal law as well as of morality, and tho' it aims at enforcing moral duties, its chief power consists in enacting punishment for those crimes which are strictly definable by legislative authority. In some instances, however, he has departed from the gentleness of injunction, and sanctioned parental authority with the severest punishment: "Whosoever striketh his father or mother, whosoever curseth his father or mother, shall surely die," *Exod.* xxi. 15. In many points, the laws of Moses are superior in wisdom, humanity, and justice to those of any other ancient legislator, and where they fall short, or countenance erroneous principles, these defects are to be attributed to the ignorance of the times, rather than to the fault of the legislator. If the Jews were cruel, it was only to the other nations, whom it was their policy to subdue and keep at a distance, but to each other the precepts of Moses recommend gentleness, humanity, and forbearance. To succor the oppressed, to defend the fatherless and the widow, to receive the stranger, to be kind, to be merciful, to be pitiful, gentle, and humane, are precepts of the Mosaical law, tho' some men suppose them

*The System
of Moses
a penal*

to have been first delivered by Christ. The laws of Moses, on the whole, so far as they relate to morality, must have had a considerable effect in civilizing the rude nature of man, and giving him just ideas of those relative duties, without which there is no comfort in life, nor any enjoyment in society. The law concerning the destruction of witches, tho' a mark of barbarism, has disgraced the code of more civilized nations than the Jews, (see Statutes, 1 Jac. 12.) and even this foolish severity is fully atoned for by the laws contained in Leviticus and elsewhere, "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest." And, "Thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger," *Lev. xix. 9. 10.* The same kind advice is given again, *Deut. xxiv. 19.* "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind," *Lev. xix. 14.* "Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge," verse 15. "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of

thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," verse 18. "If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, yea, tho' he be a stranger or a sojourner," *Lev. xxv. 35*. In all that regards the treatment of slaves, the same mild precepts are inculcated. The greatest consideration for the poor is every where enforced. "If a man be poor thou shalt not sleep with his pledge, in any case thou shalt deliver him his pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment and bless thee," *Deut. xxiv. 12, 13*. "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger and the fatherless, nor take the widow's garment to pledge," verse 17. Even dumb animals are not forgotten by the humanity of Moses, for he says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," *xxv. 4*. The last of the benevolent precepts of Moses which I mean to cite, is one which regardeth the poor: "If there be among you a poor man, and one of your brethren, within any of the gates, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thy hand against him; but thou shalt open thy hand wide unto him, and shalt lend him sufficient in his need in that which he wanteth," *Deut. xv. 7, 8*.

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was traditional; they contain excellent advice to men of all ranks and stations, and are a proof that their authors were well acquainted with the world. I use the word authors because Solomon was not the author of them all, for he, like Confucius and other editors of wise sayings, collected together the aphorisms of many who had gone before him, some having the names of their authors, others not, to these he added a few of his own. Even now, in our present improved state of society, there are many good sayings and expressions floating in common conversation, which, from their wisdom and conciseness, have acquired proverbial celebrity. Solomon, and Jesus the son of Sirach, did no more than collect such as these together into one volume, and publish them under their own names, which has been the means of their preservation to a remote posterity. To the Proverbs of Solomon, little can be added of moral wisdom, and he that reads them without being improved, must either be incapable of improvement, or require none. They contain admirable lessons of prudence for young people, and were they divested of their religious dress, might be more generally read by those who are disgusted with any thing that wears the appear-

ance of cant, and affected sanctity, for they are mere maxims of worldly prudence, as they promise only worldly advantages, and teach us rightly to enjoy the good things of this life. Riches and honors they tell us, are not to be enjoyed without them, and by them may riches and honors be acquired, chap. viii. 18; they inculcate prudence, justice, and temperance, sincerity, peacefulness, moderation, chastity, compassion, and humility, chap. xi. 31, but say not a word of fortitude. In chap. xi. v. 16, perhaps the virtue of prudence is stretched too far: "He that hateth suretyship is sure." We ought certainly not to pledge ourselves for every man, but to those in whom we have confidence, it is a duty we owe to each other. Notwithstanding the excellence of these precepts, it is to be remarked, that they contain many tedious repetitions, as may be seen by the references at the side of our common bibles; yet, on the whole, it will be found, that few more excellent collections of moral advice exist. They contain more knowledge of mankind than usually falls to the lot of kings; but if they were more read and practised by kings, it would be better both for them and the world. Such is the admirable brevity of the Proverbs, that they have far-

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nished matter of reflection to divines and moralists, which has been wire-drawn through many ponderous volumes, and a single verse of Solomon, by the modern talent for amplification, has been spun out into as many sermons as there are verses in the book.

Jesus
of Sirach The wisdom of the son of Sirach is little inferior to that of the pretended Solomon; it is of a much later date, and therefore reproves many breaches of moral duty which were unknown to the former, and contains allusions to many customs and practices which were not in being at the time when the other compilation was formed; yet there are many points in which they are alike, and many precepts which are to be found in both. The virtue of fortitude which is never mentioned in the Proverbs, is repeatedly enforced in the Ecclesiasticus: "Set thy heart aright, and constantly endure, and make not haste in time of trouble," chap. ii. 2. "Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low estate," verse 4. "When the dead is at rest, let his remembrance rest: and be comforted when his spirit is departed from him," chap. xxxviii. 23. "A patient man will bear for a time, and afterward joy shall spring up unto him," chap. i. 23. "Dis-

trust not the Lord when thou art poor,"
verse 28.

The book of Ecclesiasticus displays a wider extent of knowledge, and a greater acquaintance with life than that of the Proverbs, so that it must have been written in a more advanced state of society, for there is hardly any station in life, of which the duties do not seem to have been understood. Mercy and compassion to the poor are the most frequently repeated, as indeed in all those writings which are called sacred; much of it is borrowed from the Psalms, and from many other books; the professed author, indeed, tells us, that most of it was compiled. The constant attention to the poor which is enforced so strongly in the law of Moses, in Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus, bespeaks the amiable spirit of their authors, and can never be too often repeated in modern times, when the poor are too much despised.—To select the maxims of prudence which are to be found in every chapter of this excellent book, is almost impossible; I have many times attempted it, but finding it was likely to take up too much room, I leave it to my readers to make their own choice, as the book, if not in every one's hands, is at least within their reach.

*displays
greater
knowledge
than Solomon
proverb.*

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*Systems
Confucius,
Moses,
compared.*

The morality of Confucius, like that of Cicero and many other philosophers, stands by itself, independent and unsupported by any other aid than its own internal excellence. The morality of the Old Testament claims a divine origin, but pretends to no future nor distant reward; connected with a religious establishment, its existence has endured through numberless ages, but its efficacy has perhaps never been so great as that of the Chinese philosopher, for both Jews and Christians have disgraced their teachers, while the disciples of the Pagan instructor, tho' not numerous, have been genuine and steadfast. The Bible, without the advantage of being read in its original language, is so far naturalized in ours as to be received with equal authority, and the defects of the translation are supplied by the zeal of the faithful, for what cannot be comprehended may be received, and even admired by the pious believer. To say the truth, there is a charm in its ancient simplicity which it is impossible to equal in any modern composition, and which clothes it with a degree of sanctity, even in the opinions of those who are most unwilling to allow its divine authenticity.

*in the
 biography
 of Diogenes
 Laertius.*

The greatest part of the philosophers whose lives have been written by Diogenes Laertius,

left upon record some precepts of morality which ought never to be forgotten; their physical or metaphysical doctrines I have no desire to remember, for they all equally wander in uncertainty. Socrates was the first who attempted wholly to divert the minds of men from such pursuits, but there were many before his time who have left us memorable and sententious precepts of morality; these are contained in answers to moral and prudential questions.

THALES

1st Thales

Being asked by one who had committed adultery, whether he should not swear that he had not committed it, replied "No, for perjury is a greater crime than adultery." "The most difficult thing," he said, "is to know yourself, the easiest to give advice, and the most pleasant to obtain what you wish." It was asked of him how we must live justly and honestly, he replied, "By not doing those things we find fault with in others." "Who is truly happy," said some one, "He who is healthy in body, easy in fortune, and well educated." "Never forget your friends," was another of his maxims, and his biographer asserts, that he was the author of that golden aphorism, "Know thyself," which has been ascribed to Chilo.

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Being asked which was the worst of all wild beasts, he answered, "A tyrant," which of all tame ones, he said, "A flatterer."

30
Solon

SOLON.

The following are amongst the precepts of this wise lawgiver. "Consider integrity as stronger than oaths." "Lie not." "Study good things." "Contract no sudden friendships." "Follow reason." "Avoid the wicked." "Honor your parents."

30
Chilo

CHILO.

"Govern your tongue." "Honor old age." "Be on your guard against yourself." "An honorable loss is better than dishonorable gain." "Insult not the wretched." "Govern well your own household." "Restrain your anger." "Obey the laws." "Gold tries the minds of men."

46
Pittacus

PITTACUS.

"Wise men foresee evils, and brave men know how to bear them." "Never divulge your wishes or designs, for if you cannot accomplish them, you will be laughed at." "Restore a deposit." "Speak not evil of a friend, nor even of an enemy." "Love sobriety, truth, honor, friendship, and diligence."

5
Bias —

BIAS.

He said every man was unfortunate who



could not bear misfortune. "It is a disease of the mind to aim at impossibilities." Being asked what was the pleasantest thing in life, he replied, "Hope." "Deliberate long before you determine, but persist when you have once begun." "The majority of mankind are bad."

CLEOBULUS.

Cleobulus

"Ignorance and loquacity are the most common things in the world." "Shew kindness to your friends to make them more friendly, and to your enemies to make them friends." "Be more studious to hear than to speak." "Be moderate in your pleasures." "Be not insolent in prosperity." "Neither caress nor scold your wife before company, for the first is a mark of folly, the last of rudeness."

PERIANDER.

Periander

"Quiet is good, temerity is dangerous, gain is base." "Pleasures are mortal, honors are immortal." "In prosperity be moderate, in adversity prudent." "Be the same to your friends whether they are fortunate or unfortunate." "Perform your promise." "Keep secrets."

ANARCHARSIS

Anarcharsis

Being reproached by an Athenian with being a Scythian, he replied, "My country may be a reproach to me, but you are a reproach to

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your country." Being asked what was both good and bad, he replied, "The tongue." He said, "It was better to have one good friend than many worthless."

9th
arcesilaus

ARCESILAUS.

"It is the peculiar excellence of philosophy, to know the proper time for every thing."

10

Bion -

BION.

"Prudence as much excels all the other virtues, as the sight does the other senses."

11

antisthenes

ANTISTHENES.

"Virtue is the effect of instruction." "Virtue consists in deeds, not in words." "All good men are friends." "A just man is more worthy of our regard than a relation." "Wisdom is a wall which can neither be broken down nor surrendered." "Our own minds should be a tower of impregnable strength."

12th

metrocles

METROCLES.

"Some things are to be bought with money, and some with time and diligence." "Riches are an evil if not well employed."

*Of the moral
& metaphysical
institutions
of
Pythagoras*

The moral maxims of Pythagoras are all that I proposed to consider, but a few words may be said, without much deviation, concerning his metaphysical opinions and philosophical institutions. All writers agree, that

after having been initiated in the mysteries of the Greeks and barbarians, he took a voyage to Egypt, that fruitful mother of wisdom and of folly, and there also was admitted into the number of the elect, by an initiation into the greater, and the lesser mysteries. From all that can be gathered concerning these ceremonies, there is little doubt that they contained the doctrines of the priests on the immortality of the soul, a belief which, arising from no sufficient evidence, has been the source of many and various follies. To relate all the contradictory and ridiculous opinions of the Grecian philosophers on this subject, would fill many volumes, all ending in doubt and uncertainty. Few opinions are more ridiculous than that of Pythagoras concerning the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls; it may furnish matter for wit, but gives little satisfaction to sober philosophy. Let us then number this among the follies to which every great man is liable, and consider more attentively his positive and moral precepts; the former, like most of the same nature derived from the East, chiefly regarded the health of the body, tho' to us who dwell in a different climate, they seem to have had no meaning whatever. The eastern lawgivers in general

*His
metempsychosis*

*His
moral
precepts
considered*

The institutions of Pythagoras were intended, by their singularity, to attract the attention of the multitude, and to lead them to the practice of virtue;—they were the means, not the ends of his philosophy, and perhaps never any civil or prudential regulations were so suddenly adopted and so suddenly abandoned; for having experienced severe persecution, even in his lifetime, the people whom he converted to his opinions soon forsook them, and there remained but a few of his chosen disciples, with whom his name was held in veneration; but his principles of morality and legislation were much longer preserved, and were put in practice in various states many years after his decease. Diogenes Laertius contradicts the idea of his having never written any thing, for he says he wrote three books, one on education, another on politics, and another on physics. The doctrines of Pythagoras were of two kinds, the exoteric, or that communicated to the candidates for admission into the interior society, and the esoteric, or that which was revealed to the initiated. They embraced not only morality, but physics, medicine, theology, and astronomy; with the first I am only concerned, and I will endeavor to select the most remarkable. Sto-

*The Institutions
of Pythagoras
the means
not the ends
of his system*

*His doctrines
of 2 kinds
Exoteric
& Esoteric*

they will but give their minds to it. Things the most unpleasant may become the reverse, by long habit, and a determination to like them; antipathies of every kind may be conquered by time and perseverance. Were men fully impressed with this maxim, no kind of vicious or unwholesome pleasure could ever be predominant, for by long custom, even the most simple fare and the most insipid meats acquire a relish equal to the most highly seasoned luxury. Let men but exert this power over the passions, and its effect in producing content and happiness is hardly to be conceived. "We ought either to be silent, or to speak such things as are better than silence." "Do those things which you think right, tho' you think that after you have done them, you shall be disesteemed, for the vulgar is an ill judge of good things, and as you despise their praise, so despise their censure." "Temperance is the strength of the soul to preserve it from passions." No man is free who doth not command himself." "To possess continence is the greatest wealth."—"Drunkenness is the canker of the flower of the mind." The sacrifices of fools are the food of fire, and their gifts the subsistence of sacrilegious persons," "A horse is not to be guided

without a bridle, nor riches without wisdom." "Esteem it a good part of education to be able to bear the want of education in others." "All men acknowledge wisdom to be the greatest good, yet few endeavor to obtain it." "Friendship makes one man of two." "Various and manifold are the uses of opportunity." These are the most remarkable of his maxims, and they are proofs of his profound meditation on mankind. Whether it was imposture or credulity cannot now be determined, but it is certain that he laid claim to a divine revelation, for he used a symbolical method of teaching, which he said was derived to him from Apollo. In the early ages of the world, even the best moral precepts were unable to obtain a reception among mankind, without the belief of a divine origin, so that we find few legislators who have not availed themselves of this powerful support.

Pythagoras, The symbols of Pythagoras are curious, and have been variously interpreted; they are thirty nine in number, and are chiefly illustrative of virtue and piety. "Decline high ways," is an exhortation to avoid the opinion of the multitude, and to follow that of the virtuous few. "Cut not fire with a sword:" the most reasonable interpretation, is exasperate not an angry man, but give way to him. "Pass not

over a balance" means, violate not the principles of justice. "Sit not upon a bushel," that is, live not idly, but provide things requisite for living. "Breed nothing that has crooked talons,"—means to be free and communicative, and avoid rapacity. "Entertain not a swallow under your roof," take not an ungrateful and inconstant person for your friend. "Give not your right hand readily to every one," that is, contract no sudden friendships. "Eat not the heart," means, consume not yourself with care. "Beware of beans;" whether this precept was to be taken literally or symbolically, the learned have not determined. To these symbols others may be added, collected by Iamblichus, of which the principal are these:—"Take not up what falls from the table," which must mean, live not upon other men, tho' it has been otherwise interpreted. "Break not bread," divide not friends. "Set down salt," remember justice, which preserveth all things. "Pluck not a crown," offend not the laws established. "Hurt not a mild plant," harm not the harmless. "Sail not on the ground," raise not such taxes as are burdensome to industry.—Here ends the moral wisdom of Pythagoras, which justly entitles him to a higher name than that of philosopher.

*His
moral
precepts*

The moral precepts of Pythagoras we have seen are not numerous, so that the tendency of his philosophy is to be gathered as much from his institutions as from his words: purity and simplicity of manners were the great objects of his advice, and if his regulations had been as well adapted to a whole country, as to a small society, peace and happiness might have been spread over the earth, but large bodies of men cannot long be preserved from vice, and vice will ever be the disturber of happiness; such is the constitution of the world.

*His
institution*

The institutions of Pythagoras contained too much mystery, and too many rigorous observances for the generality of mankind, and therefore could only be supported for a while, by the spirit of a sect. His disciples lived together in a large house at Crotona, and were divided into different classes, some of whom were occupied in divine contemplation, and others in studying the stars, while the rest were employed in the management of the house, to prepare them for the concerns of the world. It was not easy for any one to commence his novitiate without undergoing a strict examination into his life, habits, and conduct, and upon admission, he was to deliver up all his

possessions to the common fund; for three years he was hardly noticed, and the term of his probation frequently lasted six or seven, without he shewed particular signs of merit. When this period was over, he was condemned to five years of silence, and after that he was examined for his admission into the mysteries of the sect, and indulged with a sight of the great teacher; if he was not equal to pass this examination, he was condemned to a living tomb, in the interior of the house, and deprived of all communication with the society; the same punishment was inflicted on those who divulged the sacred doctrines to the profane. A certain number were permitted to return into the world, and resume their different employments; while they continued in the college, they rose early every morning, and underwent two examinations,—the first, as to what they had said or done the evening before; the next, what they intended to do during the day. They then put on a clean white robe, the emblem of purity, and having chanted hymns to the lyre, prostrated themselves before the rising sun; after which they commenced their different studies and amusements, which consisted of walking in their beautiful gardens, conversing upon sub-

jects of natural and moral philosophy, and attending the lectures of professors in the different sciences; Pythagoras himself frequently mixing among them, and asking them questions. Then commenced the exercises of wrestling, and running, and after that they sat down to a frugal repast; they then returned to their garden, where they conversed in parties of two or three together on the subjects which they had been studying, but under a strict injunction never to mingle ridicule, irony, nor calumny, with their discourse. The two leading principles of their lives were an intimate union with the gods, by meditation and prayer, and the same with men, thro' affection and benevolence. By such a life, the turbulent and boisterous passions which disturb men in the commerce of the world were completely banished, and the disciples of that favoured sect seemed "to antedate the bliss of heaven," to which it was their ambition continually to aspire. Their great objects were all in common; they therefore had competition without rivalry, and sacrificed every thing to the love of harmony; they had neither enmity, malice, nor distrust; they had no occasion to deceive, nor to envy each other; whenever the slightest expression of warmth had appeared in their

conversation, they never slept without shaking hands, as a token that no spark of enmity remained. Pythagoras, who lived among them with the affection of a father, but with the authority of a monarch, sought only to calm their differences, and inform their minds; by this constant attention and regard, he acquired such an influence among them, that his lightest words were considered as oracles, and all objections were silenced by these commanding words, "He said it."* Like the free-masons of modern times, the disciples of Pythagoras were known to each other, in every part of the world, by certain signals, without any previous acquaintance, and whenever they knew of a brother in distress, they were bound to relieve him to their utmost ability—Pythagoras himself went from Italy to Delos to succor his old preceptor Pherecydes, and staid with him till his decease.—Vide Diod. Sic. vol. 9. They expressed neither impatience nor complaints under misfortune, neither meanness, nor weakness in danger; they never descended to intreaties, because in all cases they required only

* *Autos ipse*, or *ipse dixit*, is almost anglicised to express a peremptory affirmation.

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justice; nor to flattery, because they admired truth above all things; their object was to propagate their doctrines throughout the world, from a conviction of their beneficent tendency. By refusing to admit the great and the profligate into their society, they excited the flames of persecution, and for the reasons before-mentioned, they were calumniated, and banished from Crotona, and at length finally dispersed, but a society whose principles had formed such characters as Epaminondas and Phocion deserved a better lot.

*Estimate of
the Merits
of this
Institution*

The merits of the system of Pythagoras, compared with those which I have already spoken of, it is by no means difficult to estimate; the moral tendency of his institution no man will venture to doubt, but it was better suited to a sect, than to the world, and if the practical and general utility of every human invention is to decide its merits, the moral maxims of Confucius, and the Old Testament, will weigh against those of Pythagoras as gold to a feather; they teach pure morality without mystery or mummery, and bring their readers at once to the knowledge of their duty; he requires years of previous discipline, and then a rigorous initiation, they speak to the heart and judgment at once, he wearies both, to a point almost too great for

human patience, and then perhaps for a slight defect of knowledge, rejects the candidate to another seven years of idle penance and ignominious silence. All this may do very well for men of a strong temper of mind, but it is not calculated for the multitude, and therefore could never do any extensive good; it shews indeed the height of excellence at which some men may arrive by patient thinking, and continued discipline, but it is a dangerous experiment which few are capable of enduring, and fewer are willing to hazard; the world is not to be reformed by such austerities, nor can even a single sect long maintain itself, which practises such rigid penance, and had they even not suffered persecution, it is hardly possible they could have been kept together for any length of time after their leader's death. The name of Pythagoras has been, and will be long remembered, not so much for what he accomplished, as for what he intended.

The morality taught by Socrates is perhaps the best calculated for practical utility, of any which the ancient philosophers have left us; before his time, men had wasted their lives in idle speculations on the motions of the heavenly bodies, on the formation of the world,

*The Ethic
of
Socrates*

things which we ought to ask of them, and those things in which we should trust to our own endeavors. "All things," says he, "which experience shews us, are to be acquired by teaching and practice, we should exert ourselves to procure; if a man sows a field, or builds a house, or manages a state, he must learn the rules and methods by which these things are to be performed by instruction and exertion, but whether he shall reap the fruits of his field, or enjoy the house he has built, or succeed in well governing the state, these things belong to the gods, and he must ask their aid and opinion." His perpetual advice was, to dismiss all idle speculations on the nature of the universe, first, on account of their uncertainty, and next, for their inutility; "For," says he, "there are an hundred opinions upon these subjects, and every man thinks another a fool who differs from him, and besides, they who arrive at the utmost knowledge of the powers of nature cannot control them at their will, as he can direct mankind who studies their passions and propensities; they can only *know* these things, and all their knowledge ends in itself:" such was his opinion of all enquiries into nature; his own enquiries were limited to human af-

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fairs, he sought only to know the difference between piety and impiety, justice and injustice, honesty and dishonesty, wisdom and folly, valor and cowardice; to enquire into the nature of politics and political duties, and to discover by what knowledge a man may be good and useful, and how far ignorance renders him mean, contemptible, and wretched.— The lessons which he taught others, he practised himself, for he was of all men the most temperate in his mode of living, the most moderate in his enjoyments, and the most patient in suffering; he depended, indeed, more upon the efficacy of his example than of his instructions, yet was not inattentive either to his person or to his manner of living, for excess on one side, he thought no less culpable, than on the other. Virtue he considered as the effect of habit, and therefore he laid much stress on education. Such was his horror of intemperance, that he said, “A man who was devoted to the indulgence of his appetites is not to be trusted in any relation of life, either as a general, a statesman, a friend, a guardian, or a confidant.” When he was reproached by Antiphon for giving his instructions gratis, he replied, “My reward is not money, but satisfaction. I am as much delighted with possessing

friends, as another man is with a rare bird, or a fine horse; and as instruction comes with the greatest effect when disinterested, let us think it sufficient reward if we can do good to each other." He used to say, that the surest road to fame and honor, was to be what you wished to seem, for he that endeavored to deceive others with an appearance of what he did not possess, was as great a robber as he that deprived you of your goods or your money. It was a maxim with him, that a man who undertakes to manage public affairs, should decline no labor, danger, nor fatigue for the public good: "The road to virtue and honor," said he, "is rough and difficult, while that of pleasure is easy, soft, and smooth." His conversation with his son on the vice of ingratitude, deserves to be more fully translated, Vide Xen. Mem. lib. ii. cap. 2.

Having seen his eldest son Lamprocles speaking hastily and disrespectfully to his mother, *Ingratitudo Exemplis*
 "Tell me, my son," said he, "what sort of men do you think deserve to be called ungrateful?" "Those," said Lamprocles, "who having received favors, neglect to return them when they have an opportunity." "Do you think ingratitude to be a crime?" "Certainly." "Do you think, that as it is unjust to re-

duce our friends to slavery, but lawful to do so to our enemies, that we are justified in being ungrateful to the latter, but not the former?" "By no means, I think that whoever has it in his power to return a kindness, either to a friend or an enemy, if he neglects to do it, is guilty of injustice." "Then according to this doctrine, you think ingratitude to be the greatest injustice?" "Certainly." "And that so much the greater favor a man has received, he is so much more the unjust if he does not return them?" "No doubt." "Whom then can we find more indebted to others than children to their parents, who by giving them being, have put them in a state to enjoy all the pleasures of life, and all the goods which the gods have given to men. The mother bears the burden which she has received, loaded and oppressed even to the risque of her life, and imparts to it for nine long months her own sustenance; having at length passed the agony and danger of child-birth, she nourishes and tends the helpless infant, which is neither sensible of her kindness, nor to whom it is indebted; with ceaseless perseverance she continues to fulfil her duty in providing for it every thing wholesome and pleasant, and watches over it day and night, not even caring whe-

ther she shall be repaid for all her tender solicitude. Parents think it not enough merely to nourish their children, but when they perceive them old enough to learn, they not only impart to them their own knowledge, but send them at a great expence to be taught by others, to complete them in all wisdom.”—

“ But supposing they have done all this, and even more, do you think we are bound to bear all their ill humors? Do you think you are justified in speaking so harshly to your mother, when you know that what she said was with no ill intention, and that she wishes you well with all her heart?” “ That I believe.”—

“ Can you then think that a mother who has been so kind to you, who has watched over you, and prayed for you in sickness, deserves the name of ill-natured? Do you not know that our city, tho’ she takes no notice of other kinds of ingratitude, severely punishes those who are ungrateful to their parents, and rejects them from every public employment, rightly conceiving that such a man’s sacrifices, even in his public capacity, could not be acceptable, and that he could not perform any other office in a manner to merit the approbation of the gods; nay, if a man should neglect to perform the accustomed funeral rites to his deceased

parents, the city makes a rigid enquiry after such culpable negligence. If you are wise, therefore, my son, you will entreat the gods to forgive you, if you have committed any offence against your mother, and you will take care that even men should not know it, lest they should shun your society, and you should be left without a friend, for they could have no dependence upon your gratitude, when they saw you ungrateful even to your mother." He gave nearly the same admonitions on the necessity of brotherly love and affection, regarding relationship to be the first ground of friendship:—"A good and faithful friend," said he, "is the best of all possessions, for the use of all others is inferior to that of a friend; he is above all price. There can be no friendship but in virtue, for men devoted to the indulgence of their appetites and passions cannot be friends to each other." Idleness he considered as the greatest of all evils, and on this subject gave some excellent advice to his friend Aristarchus, who having to maintain fourteen female cousins, who had come to him for protection during a civil disturbance, he advised him to give them employment, and after conquering some little scruples of false pride, he convinced him that by so doing, he was ren-

dering a service both to himself and his friends, upon which Aristarchus went and bought wool and wheels, and other implements of industry, and set the ladies to work, and in time they became so fond of it, that they reproached him with being the only idle person in the house. He gave similar advice to Eutherus, who having been reduced by the calamities of war to earn his daily bread, came to him in distress, under the apprehension, that when old age overtook him, he should no longer be able to gain a subsistence:—"Apply," said he, "to some one who will take you as a steward or superintendant of his estate;" after many objections on the score of servitude, to which Socrates easily replied, he too consented to take his advice.

On the duties of kings and ministers, no man has given better counsel:—"The management of a state," says he, "differs only in number from the management of a family; men are the subjects and the instruments in both, and ignorance is the only cause of failure in either." He had the highest opinion of political duties, for he said to Glaucon (a young man who had undertaken a public employment at too early an age, and disgraced himself by his ignorance), "You have chosen an employment

*Socrates
on Public
Duties*

"Tell me," said he to Charmides, "what you should call a man who was qualified, in all respects, to bear away the prize in the olympic games, and by so doing, to obtain honor for himself and his country, and yet, thro' modesty, could not be prevailed on to enter the lists?"
 "I should call him bashful and effeminate."
 "And what should you call a man who was fully equal to the management of public affairs, and yet was unwilling to undertake the charge?"
 "I should call him the same." "I consider you to be such a one." "Ah! Socrates, you greatly over-rate my powers." "No man shines more in private circles, therefore why should they who can speak so well before men of knowledge and experience, hesitate to harangue before an ignorant multitude. I beg of you, do not shew such ignorance of yourself, nor fall into the common fault of modest men; do not be dispirited, but examine yourself, and neglect not the concerns of the public, for if they flourish by your means, you will not only benefit the city and your friends, but yourself." Being asked whether he thought valor was acquired, or solely the gift of nature, he answered, "It is originally from nature, but may be improved by art and study." Justice and every other virtue he called wisdom. He

called those men envious who were distressed at the successes of their friends; upon which some one asked him, if it were possible for one man to have a regard for another, and be grieved at his prosperity. "Yes," said he, "there are many who, tho' they will not refuse to succor their friends in distress, cannot bear to witness their good fortune." "Kings and rulers," said he, are not those who merely bear an hereditary sceptre, nor those who are elected by the people, nor those who are chosen by lot, nor those who obtain power, by force or by fraud; but those who know how to govern." Being asked what he thought the best thing a man could obtain, he answered, "Success; but," said he, "I consider success and good fortune very different things,—the one is the result of well-judged endeavors, the other of chance." The conversation of Socrates, says Xenophon, was admirably adapted to arrest the attention of his hearers, and to be remembered with advantage, even out of his presence; for his discourse was both grave and lively. He considered education, joined to natural talents, capable of making men every thing that they ought to be, towards themselves, the public, and their friends. He re-proved the audacity of those who, valuing

themselves upon their riches, thought they had no need of education or knowledge, and that money was enough to enable them to obtain any thing they pleased, and sufficient to ensure them respect and honor. "He must be a fool," said he, "who thinks he can obtain wisdom without instruction, or act wisely without either. Men of the greatest knowledge and abilities, who are not virtuous, are only more disposed and more able to do mischief." "Neither the violence of the people, nor the hopes of reward," says Xenophon, "nor any other consideration, could induce him to commit injustice, in the discharge of his public duties. He was accustomed to estimate the value of all sciences by their utility. He advised his friends, above all things, to attend to their health, and having consulted those who were best able to inform them, what sort of food, or what kind of exercise, is most conducive to their purpose, to adhere to it constantly. Leisure he considered as one of the most valuable possessions, knowledge as the greatest good, and ignorance as the greatest evil." Being asked what he thought the virtue of a young man, he answered, "Too much of nothing." "Is it better to marry, or live single?" said some one to him.—"Which ever you

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do," said he, "you will repent." Xenophon finishes his *Memorabilia* with these emphatic words: "Such he was as I have represented him; pious beyond all other men; just, so as not to injure any one in the most trifling article, but ready to do them all the good in his power; temperate, so as never to prefer pleasure to virtue; prudent, so as never to be mistaken in his judgment of right and wrong, nor to need the advice of others, but able, at all times, to define the bounds of good and evil, and to exhort others to every thing that was noble and excellent; such he seemed to me—the best and the happiest of mankind; if any man thinks otherwise, let him compare him with others, and then determine."

*Systemic
moral*

The philosophy of Socrates embraced every department of human life, and tho' many of his conversations related by Xenophon, when divested of their original expression, appear trifling and tedious, yet from the whole might be formed a system of morality, comprehending all the relative duties, as forcible and comprehensive as any now extant. Instruction

* Καί γὰρ τὸ γνῆσαι, καὶ τὸ μὴ γνῆσαι κακόν;

Sitt.
Socratic.

conveyed by conversation, unless it is delivered in strong and pithy sentences, loses much of its effect by repetition; the morality of Socrates has the disadvantage of being delivered to us at second hand, and as it has neither the forcible brevity of proverbial sayings, nor the concise simplicity of direct advice, the spirit of it evaporates considerably, first, by being committed to writing, and next by translation; there is much wisdom and subtlety, no doubt, in his remarks, but many of them lose their effect by being deprived of the aid of his manner, language, and personal acquaintance; it is not to be wondered, therefore, if they do not strike us like the sententiousness of Confucius, the conciseness of the Proverbs, or the gentle simplicity of Jesus. The merit of Socrates is rather to be found in the general tendency of his conduct and sentiments, than in any particular conversation or maxims; the revolution he brought about in the pursuits of philosophy, and the effect of his doctrines on succeeding moralists, and on the general state of society, constitute his greatest claims to praise, and perhaps even now we feel the good of his morality, which is adapted to all the uses of common life, and reaches even to the lowest members of society, for his was no sour, au-

him, was its reference to practical advantage, or in plainer words, to the principle of utility,* the only rational end of human conduct; for they who deny utility to be the basis of morals, bewilder themselves in metaphysical or religious refinements, which they fancy they comprehend because they are unintelligible, according to the old maxim of faith, "*Credo quai impossibile est.*" No good reason can be given for any action, but because a man conceives it to be useful to himself or others, or to both. There may be possibly a species of depravity, a kind of gratuitous wickedness which induces men to do mischief for mischief's sake, but it is hardly credible, and if there is, the exception only proves the rule, for most men look either to pleasure or profit, even in their most trifling actions, and if they have also formed the habit of deriving pleasure from conferring it on others, they have arrived at the highest pitch of human excellence. Socrates seems to have proposed no other end than that of utility in all that he recommended; it is to him, therefore, that we are indebted for the best practical motive of human conduct,

* Atque ipsa utilitas, justi prope mater et sequi.

Horat. Ser. 3 lib. 1. v. 97.

dence can prove, nor is such a proof required by those who, whether happy or miserable, limit their researches to the bounds of their reason, and are content with nothing less than demonstrative evidence, viz. the evidence of experience. Socrates did more for mankind than any other heathen philosopher who lived before his time, and much less evil than Jesus Christ, for his morality has caused no bloodshed; the reason is obvious, it was not supported by any religious system.

A multitude of excellent moral precepts may be found in the Greek Anthology, in the minor Greek poets, and in the writers for the Grecian Stage.

The religion of Jesus Christ has, like the simple acorn which becomes an oak, spread over a great part of the civilized globe. So singular a phenomenon has been imputed to various causes, to me there seem but two which can account for it, and these are, first, the belief of its divine origin, for thirteen men believing themselves inspired, or only pretending to believe it, will soon make many others believe the same, in an age of ignorance and credulity, and when once any opinion has taken root, we all know how difficult it is to overturn it, even in an age more enlightened. The se-

*on the
Christian
System*

tion, but they are little suited to the common intercourse of life, or to promote the general happiness of the world; they may belong to saints and martyrs, but they are not calculated for men who wish to enjoy themselves even with moderation and temperance; we must therefore pronounce, that much of the morality of Jesus is of too spiritual and refined a nature for the commerce of the world; or could we even suppose it to be brought to such a state as is there recommended, we should not consider it as any improvement, for the love of mortification, suffering, and mourning, is by no means a temper of mind calculated to promote rational happiness, or worldly prosperity; they may be forced upon us by inevitable circumstances, but they are not what we ought willingly to embrace if we wish to enjoy ourselves. Suffering, in many instances, may be the lot of man, and when it comes upon us we should bear it like men, but any system of religion or morality which teaches us to consider it as a mark of divine favor, or as the sum of earthly happiness, must first require the entire subjection of those rational faculties by which, in all other cases, we are enabled to judge of good and evil, of pain and pleasure, of happiness and misery; the same may be said of that

tranquillity; the one sets bounds to resentment, the other gives room to boundless iniquity. The morality of Jesus, where it is delivered in parables, is subject to various applications, and to be variously interpreted, but where he speaks in plain and intelligible terms, it is an insult to common sense to suppose that he said one thing and meant another. "To take no thought for to-morrow," is a positive command, and it is illustrated by an illusion to the ravens, to the lilies, and to the sparrows. It is impossible for any man to speak in terms less ambiguous, but it does not suit the worldly advocates for Christianity to take the passage in its literal sense, and therefore to serve their purpose, it must be twisted to a meaning which was never intended. The leading features in the morality of Jesus Christ are purity of mind, patience, resignation, and self-denial, a love of peace, a hatred of contention, and contempt of all earthly enjoyment; these are the passive virtues recommended by the mild author of Christianity, but they who wish to find the more active ones, must look for them in the writings of the bold apostle of the Gentiles, *The* who differed widely from his humble Master. *Sec.*

The sentiments of Jesus Christ, in many strong and leading points, resembled those of *the*

for the great theatre of the world, but to form the lives of Ascetics. Jesus Christ had never seen mankind in any enlarged sphere, nor conversed with them in many different departments of life, and his advice to one and all was the same; he did not seem to enter into the various turns of human passions, nor characterise the different ranks of life by appropriate admonition. Christianity is a religion for the poor and the afflicted, for to those who are unhappy in this world, it holds out the hopes of a better; but it is not calculated for the rich, because it forbids so many of the enjoyments which nature and art have provided. One thing, however, there is in which Jesus Christ excels all other teachers of virtue, viz. the charm of those beautiful parables, or stories, which so admirably illustrate and enliven the gospel morality. Let us then take Christianity for what it is, and not endeavor to make it what it is not. It is an excellent epitome of the mild and gentle virtues, sometimes carried to excess, but it is not a comprehensive system of moral duty. It is certainly calculated to do considerable service to society, by allaying the tumult of the fiercer passions, but it is defective in not leaving room for that degree of exertion and intrepidity which are

required for overcoming strong difficulties.— Could its precepts be universally practised, which they never have been, it might transform the world into a scene of peaceful serenity; but as mankind are, and most probably ever will be, it is more likely to leave the weak a prey to the strong, than to reform the latter by its gentle advice; and it is for this reason that it has been so much altered by those, who have adapted it to their own purposes of worldly interest. It contains things which were new to the world at the time they were promulgated, but those which are new are not practicable, and those which are practicable are not new. It was not for the first time that men were exhorted to be just, charitable, and benevolent, but from the mouth of Jesus this advice claimed the sanction of divine authority, and therefore has acquired greater permanence and celebrity, and his religion having soon obtained a temporal establishment, it gained strength and renown, independent of its doctrines or morality. Its influence as a system soon began to decline, and is perhaps now in its lowest state of temperature, for almost all who attend on public worship, do it rather as a habit than a duty, and others who are rationally attached to this

belief, embrace it rather as a matter of taste and sentiment, than from the credit which they give to its doctrines or its evidences. This fact may be gathered both from the complaint of zealots, and the confession of its candid admirers. The age of implicit belief is over, and tho' the establishments of religion may remain for a while, they are preserved rather from motives of political convenience, than from a belief of the doctrines established; they are propped up by the buttress of the state, but any great political change will be fatal to their existence. The state of the world, from the birth of Jesus to the present times, has never, in any degree, corresponded with the precepts of Christianity, which so far proves that it is impracticable as a general system. That the gentle virtues which it recommends, have found a residence in some milder natures, whose breasts were already prepared for their reception, is no argument to the contrary; it is sufficient for its adversaries if they prove that the general state of the world has never been conformable to the precepts of Jesus Christ, and it is certainly a strong argument against the truth of Christianity that it has been so much perverted and abused as to have caused more persecutions, bloodshed, and

misery, than any religious system that ever existed. I will not, however, deny, that the idea of the celestial purity and meekness which Christianity recommends, has in some measure tended to soften and refine the ruggedness of human nature. I wish to speak impartially, and to allow its due weight and influence to every species of moral instruction which has ever enlightened the world, and I am desirous to attribute to Christianity all the merit it may seem to deserve; I am therefore willing to allow, that tho' Christian purity, like Stoical virtue, are romantic fictions, yet that each of them, by holding up a model of excellence for our imitation, beyond our reach, has contributed to improve the temper of mankind, and to soften their intercourse with each other. The one attempts to make every thing subservient to reason, and the other to God, and both to eradicate the passions, to subdue the affections, and to bring every human propensity into direct subservience to its own doctrine. Our salvation, according to Jesus Christ, takes up the whole time of our existence, and a regard for it is incompatible with the indulgence of any of those pursuits which attach men to the world; the love of fame, power, or wealth, however moderated by reason and humanity,

are forbidden in the spiritual code of Jesus; the refinements of art and luxury, the pleasures of taste, the beauties of poetry, the sallies of wit and humor, are all to be repressed, lest they should withdraw us from that continual meditation on heavenly enjoyment, and that divine temper, which are required of the candidates for eternal felicity. To this it is owing that there are so few Christians among the professors of Christianity, and tho' many who call themselves such will be ready to controvert this statement, I have no fears about the final issue, for tho' the fact may be denied, it cannot be disproved. The direct tendency of all religion is to make men either hypocrites or enthusiasts. It is true that the Clergy have patched up a system of their own, which goes by the name of Christianity, by which they wish to have it believed that the morality of Jesus accords very amicably with the pursuits of the world; and there is no great harm in all this, only dont let them call it by a name which it does not deserve, and insult our commou sense with a pretence that they are acting according to the precepts of Jesus, when their conduct is in many points exactly the reverse, and their preaching only tends to explain away the force of his severe

morality; let them not call themselves **Christians**, while they are **Epicureans at heart**.—The words of Christ are every where plain and explicit; in opposition to the **Mosaical law**, which is founded on the just principles of retaliation and self-defence, he commands that we submit to violence and fraud, “for,” says he, “ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto ye, resist not evil, but **whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also**, and if a man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” Is this plain and intelligible, or does it need an interpreter,—is it practicable, or is it consistent with the practice of the world, and particularly of the Clergy when they sue for tythes? “Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy;” now in what passage of the Mosaical law it is said thou shalt hate thine enemy, I have not yet found, but in *Lev.* to which the margin refers, chap. xix. ver. 18, it is said, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” but there is not a word about enemies. Jesus, however, having depreciated, or rather falsified the morality of Moses to exalt his own, says, in direct opposition to what

Moses is supposed to say, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you," *Matt.* v. 44. "Lay not up treasures for yourselves on earth," are the words of Jesus, but they have been little regarded by his worldly disciples. "Take no thought for your life, take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed, for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Does this, or does it not, recommend a trust in God for our daily bread, independent of our own exertions? The argument from the birds of the air, and the flowers of the field, puts the matter beyond a doubt, "for," says he, "they toil not, neither do they spin; if God then so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall he clothe you, O ye of little faith." The inference is pointed, and impossible to be misunderstood; yet I am perhaps to be told

that this advice was given only to his apostles, whose divine mission exempted them from all worldly cares and concerns. Was the form of prayer which immediately precedes these words, given to them only, and not to all his disciples? I blush for those who require their understandings to be convinced when they need only use their eye sight; such, however, is the effect of prepossession and prejudice.

the morality of the epistles as stated in the text.
The morality of the epistles being in some measure different from that of Jesus Christ, a few words may be requisite to shew wherein the difference consists. In the present Christian church there are three distinct codes of morality blended in one; the first is that of Jesus, the second is that of his disciples, and the third is that of Christian divines. The first I have spoken of already, the two last demand a short consideration. The first simple rudiments of Christian morality are to be found in the discourses of Christ, his disciples enlarged upon what he delivered, and our modern divines have completed the whole. I say nothing about the fathers of the church, because we are more indebted to them for doctrines than for any improvement in morality. St Paul enters more fully into the various duties of human life than any other of the dis-

ciples of Christ; having seen more of the world, and been more conversant with mankind, he has marked more accurately than his master, the bounds of Christian submission and manly resistance. "*If it be possible* as much as in you lies, live at peace with all men," *Rom.* xii. 18. "Be ye angry, and *sin not*, let not the sun go down upon your *wrath*," *Ephes.* iv. 26. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil, the Lord reward him according to his works, *2 Tim.* iv. 14. The apostle speaks repeatedly of his diligence in making collections for the different churches, and urges his new converts to patient industry:—"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we should reap your carnal things," *1 Cor.* ix. 11, and *Rom.* xv. 27.--"Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his own hands, that he may have to give to those that need," *Ephes.* iv. 27. "Study to be quiet, and mind your own business, and to work with your own hands," *1 Thess.* iv. 11. "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you, not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us; for we com-

more copiously explained, nor enforced with greater strength of argument and language, than in the sermons composed by the most eminent divines of the church of England; they may be displayed with greater eloquence by those of the old church of France, but an address to our reason will stand the test of time better than one to our feelings, and Barrow, South, Sherlock, Atterbury, and Blair, will be read when Bourdaloue and Masillon have ceased to be admired. If our English divines have any fault, independent of their doctrines, it is that they have dwelt too long on their subjects, and wire-drawn them so far as frequently to deserve the charge of verbosity. And here I will add a tribute of grateful praise to the very excellent practical sermons of Mr Warner; if they are a little disfigured by a redundancy of language, it is a fault which may be forgotten, when it is remembered that they are the first sermons published by any divine of the church of England which ever ventured to recommend pure Christianity independent of creeds and systems, and to inculcate liberality of sentiment.

The maxims of Rochefoucault, which I have proposed to consider next in succession, seem a libel on human nature; for if they are in any

*Rochefoucault
Maxims
Consider*

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degree a faithful picture of mankind, it may be fairly said that every word which Jesus Christ spoke was uttered in vain. If Rochefoucault is right, there is no such thing as virtue in the world, but the whole is a gloomy abode of misery, peopled by selfishness with the worst of vices, envy, pride, malice, revenge, jealousy, distrust, and hatred ; these he wishes us to believe are palpable and evident, but virtue is only a semblance, a name, a phantom, a pretence, a deceitful appearance. This is the grand principle which pervades every page of his book, this is the result of his experience in the world, which he delivers to others as the guide of their conduct and the ground of their confidence ; this is the armor with which we are to set out in life, prepared to encounter the demon of self-love, and defend ourselves against its attacks ; this is the opinion which we are to form of our fellow-creatures, and by which we are to direct our conduct towards them ; this is the rule and line of our actions by which we are to arrive at happiness and promote the happiness of others. If this be true, better were it never to have been born, or to leave the world at once and dwell with the generous beasts of the forest, than to remain with base, deceitful, selfish man, who lives

under a perpetual disguise even from himself, and who puts on the appearance of virtue only the more surely to deceive. Mankind, however, with all their failings and vices, are not what Rochefoucault has represented them; his account might be true of the society with which he used to live, but to say it is true of all the world, is a false, scandalous, and malicious libel on human nature. The form of maxims suited this selfish philosopher better than that of precepts; from the opinion he had formed of mankind, he could have little confidence in the efficacy of his advice, if he had even wished to make them better, but it does not appear that he had any such intention. He wished to have it known that he was not deceived by the disguises of the world, and he has left behind him a legacy of misanthropy, which, if not wasted by some future generation more prodigally benevolent, may descend to a remote posterity. Even now, however, notwithstanding the vices of the present age, there is such a thing as active benevolence, there are men who feel a pleasure in giving pleasure to others, and soothing their distresses. It has long been a maxim of morality, that true self-love and social, are the same; but some men of narrow minds and low education maintain

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that self-love ends only in self-interest, and that charity both begins and ends at home, whereas the nature of man is, and has been in all ages the same, and most probably will remain so, but it is capable of greater or lesser degrees of refinement, like the ore of precious metals, and as he acts from a narrow or an enlarged, from a gross or a refined, from a mere selfish or a benevolent motive, he is proportionably improved.

*His System
Supposes
all mankind
to act from
sordid Self-
interest.*

Roche foucault conceived that all men acted from the low and sordid principle of self-interest, without supposing it possible that they could receive any pleasure from the consciousness of giving pleasure to others. He was right inasmuch as he believed this to be the motive of a great part of the world, but he erred most egregiously in conceiving it to be the sole motive of action with all mankind. The words public virtue, patriotism, or benevolence, are hardly to be found in his writings, and where they are, it is only for the purpose of denying their existence; hence it is that we meet with such maxims as those here cited.

Maxim "29. The evil which we do, does not draw upon us so much persecution and hatred as our good qualities."



" 39. Interest speaks all sorts of languages, and plays all sorts of characters, even that of disinterestedness."

" 62. Sincerity is the openness of the heart, we find it in very few people, and when it is to be found, it is only a species of dissimulation the better to entrap the confidence of others."

" 69. If there is any such thing as pure love; it is concealed at the bottom of our hearts, even from ourselves."

" 78. The love of justice is in most men only a desire to avoid injustice towards themselves."

" 93. Old men love to give good advice only because they can no longer give bad examples."

" 242. We easily console ourselves for the disgraces of our friends, when they give us an opportunity to shew our kindness for them."

" 312. Interest, which is accused of all our crimes, deserves generally the praise of our virtues."

" 254. We seldom call those men of sense who are not of our opinion."

Tho' I have selected a few of the most offensive of Rochefoucault's maxims, it is not to be supposed that they are all of this complexion and tendency, and wherever he enters

*His. D. R.
Maxims
more liberal*

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upon general subjects of life and manners, it is but justice to say, that he shews an acuteness of remark, and an acquaintance with mankind, rarely to be equalled by any preceding or succeeding moralist, but his remarks are all of an ill-natured turn (for he looks at human nature on the dark side), and shews us rather what we should avoid than what we should adopt. He has generalised the result of his observations on mankind into short and pithy maxims, which may be read for their utility, as the preparations of anatomists which are preserved in spirits, are consulted, but not admired. Lord Chesterfield seems to have formed his morals and his conduct on the model of Rochefoucault's maxims; it is impossible to produce a happier specimen of their consequences; the pupil and the teacher are, however, sinking fast into oblivion, from which they will probably never be recalled.

*Economy
Life "*

The Economy of Human Life had once a very rapid circulation among all ranks, but is now chiefly read by the lower orders, and by them with great improvement; it owed its short-lived celebrity to the aid of a great name, and when the charm was dissolved, it seemed to lose all its merits; a striking proof with how little judgment most people read, and how

much many books are indebted to fashion for their popularity; yet notwithstanding this little epitome of morality obtained a higher rank than it deserved, it is by no means devoid of merit, nor to be read without instruction; tho' it neither contains many things new, nor in a new dress, yet the mixture of scriptural and oriental phraseology in which it is written, gives it a venerable air of sanctity, which cannot fail to attract the multitude, and as the morality it delivers is of the purest standard, and the precepts it contains adapted to every condition of life, it cannot be read by those whose minds are not habituated to any great efforts of reasoning, without improvement and delight.

The maxims and advice of the celebrated Doctor Franklin, contained in his short essays, tho' they shew much wisdom and knowledge of the world, can hardly deserve the name of a system; they are rather rules of prudence than principles of morality, but are worthy to be read and remembered by all those who wish to direct their conduct wisely, from the experience of others. They are not mere maxims of worldly wisdom, like those of Rochefoucault, derived from a knowledge of the worst part of mankind, they are lessons of that pru-

*D Franklin's
Moral
Essays*

dence which is calculated to produce happiness in its final consequences, and is sometimes in direct opposition to the practice of the world; they contain the advice of a plain honest man, content with moderate enjoyments, and moderate wealth; they aim at nothing great, and descend to nothing mean; they tend to keep the hands pure from iniquity, and the heart free from care; they are not numerous, deep, nor comprehensive, but they contain much wisdom in a small space.

*Moral
Fictions*

Apologues, fables, and stories, are a very ancient mode of instruction, and not abandoned even in modern times. In the infancy of society, as in the infancy of man, the imagination is stronger than the judgment, and reason requires to be instructed by the gentle method of amusement; yet it is only in this infant state that such soothing arts should be employed, for men more advanced in age and civilization must be taught their duty by a direct appeal to their reason, and be told not merely to do good, but why some actions are to be avoided and others performed. "*Prodesse delectando*" is a maxim for children, or for men like children, but those who expect to arrive at the maturity of reason, must be instructed at a proper time in the nature of man, and the

moral relations of society ; but for the infant mind no species of instruction can be devised so appropriate as that which at once delights the imagination, excites the reason, and employs the memory. The moral derived from an apologue, or a fable, exercises the ingenuity to find out the application, but a story which is a copy of life, comes at once to the youthful heart, and carries its application along with it ; a fable may be mistaken or misapplied, but a story needs no comment ; a fable paints by distant similitude, but a story comes at once to the point intended. The fables of Pilpay and Longman are all that we have received from antiquity, and they have served as models for modern times ; those of Æsop are a modern forgery. Gay and More are the best English fabulists, but the former is superior to the other in simplicity, which is the great merit of a fable ; on the whole, however, it is a mode of instruction which is by no means so well adapted to a northern imagination as to the warm temper of the East, where even now almost every thing is spoken in tropes and figures.— A child will take very little interest in the conversation of lions and horses, compared to that of its own species, and were it not for their moral, fables could hardly even be en-

*Pilpay,
Longman
Fables*

*Æsop's,
Gay's, &
More's*

*Fenelon's
Telemachus*

dured ; a proof of their unpopularity is the very few we have in our language which are not borrowed. The abundance of tales, novels, romances, allegories, and poems, which have been invented for the purpose of conveying moral instruction, is sufficiently great to excuse a particular mention of any ; there is one, however, which claims to be exempted from this general omission : the *Telemachus* of Fenelon has been read in all countries, and translated into all languages, not only as a book of instruction for youth, but for the improvement of men at all ages ; yet tho' excellent in many respects, it is not without faults ; the episodes are in general too long, the moral lessons are too frequently introduced, and do not always arise naturally out of the subject, and the whole is too tedious not to fatigue a youthful mind, which to be pleased, requires a frequent variation of books and subjects, and its greatest fault is monotony ; there is little distinction of character, and the manners of different nations are ill-preserved, barbarians speak the language of philosophers (vide Book x. at the beginning), and Greeks speak the sentiments of Frenchmen ; the author appears every where too much ; both from the mouth of Mentor, and from others the most opposite,



many particulars are related too minutely, which spin out the book to a tedious length; its principal merit is in the excellent moral lesson it gives to kings and princes on the means of making their subjects happy, by promoting the useful arts, by extending civilization, and avoiding useless wars, but these are repeated too frequently, so as to excite weariness rather than to keep the attention constantly alive, which is the great point in all books in which moral instruction is to be conveyed; its other excellencies are the advice it conveys to young men to avoid the seductions of sensual pleasure, and the manner in which it is written, its purity and elegance.

The writings of Seneca are an inexhaustible storehouse of morality, and were it not for the quaint, affected, and antithetic stile in which they are conveyed to us, and for a few peculiarities of the Stoical sect, they would be unexceptionable. It is true he has in some measure softened these peculiarities by a due admixture of the Epicurean philosophy, but some portion of impracticable theory still remains. On the whole, however, few writings on morality may be read with greater advantage than those of Seneca, for the sententious aphoristic stile of the author, leaves much to be laid

*Seneca's
morals.*

hold of, which in more diffuse writers would elude observation.

Epictetus'
Ethics.

The philosophy of Epictetus resembles, in many points, that of his master Zeno, tho' it seems sometimes to have been carried to a more extravagant pitch, and to bear a likeness to the passive system of Christianity; he was born a slave, and therefore accustomed to submission, so that his doctrines have somewhat of a slavish tendency; he pushed the extravagances of his sect to their utmost length in denying pain to be an evil, and in his utter contempt for all bodily pleasures; he submitted, and wisely no doubt, with entire resignation to all the ills of life, from this consoling reflection, "I am in the place to which Providence has destined me, and to complain of my lot is to offend him."—Against natural evil this is a natural consolation, but so far as it prevents exertion to overcome the difficulties of life, it has a dangerous and debasing tendency. It is not requisite to recount many of the sentiments of Epictetus which relate to patience, and resignation to the will of Providence; his disciple Arrian has left a full relation of his discourses in Greek, which have been translated into English by a learned female.

The most copious and useful of all the Grecian philosophers is Plutarch; he had profited by the wisdom of those who had gone before him, and also written largely on many subjects which were untouched; yet he is by no means a correct or polished writer, his language is not that of the purest æra of Greek literature, his invention is fertile, yet not sufficiently pruned nor regulated; his similies and allusions are rich, numerous, and illustrative, yet sometimes too abundant, and his quotations are too frequent, and savor of an ostentation of learning, which is not to be found in the purest Greek writers; his repetition of the same idea and the same quotations are so frequent as to become tiresome; his language is sometimes copious, even to redundancy, and his subjects are not always treated with the same degree of attention and solidity; there are in all his writings evident marks of hasty composition, they are the effusions of a mind well stored with general ideas, which can dilate them at pleasure, without much depth of reflection, but possessing a copiousness of language, and a considerable quickness of invention; there is not the profundity, weight, and conciseness of Aristotle, but there is what is much better, a flow of ideas suited to the

Plutarch

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comprehension of common capacities, and calculated for the improvement of man in every rank of life. Aristotle wrote only to philosophers, but Plutarch wrote for the multitude; he embraced the whole circle of duties, not indeed with the acute comprehensive conception of the Stagyrice, but with the labored accuracy of a man who, tho' deficient in the faculty of generalizing ideas, yet possessed the more useful talent of forming, with minute diligence, a copious detail of particulars; few men will feel themselves interested in the general descriptions of Aristotle, but it is hardly possible for any man to read Plutarch, without seeing some of his vices, or passions, or failings, minutely analyzed. Plutarch is an unequal writer, he sometimes expresses himself with great force and animation, and at other times drags on his sentences with langor and heaviness, and writes as if he thought himself compelled to write; this is evident even in one of his best treatises, that on education, and in many others much more so, yet on the whole there is not one ancient moralist who may be read with so much advantage, for he is free from the extravagant peculiarities of any sect, and having formed his philosophy from the study of them all,

has more excellent notions of morality than can be attributed to any; he shews many marks of old age, particularly in his love of anecdote and quotation, and in his dwelling for a long time on one idea, which, in familiar language, we term prosing; but even with all his faults, he deserves to be read by every man who wishes to attain just notions of his duty and his interest; no writer has ever shewn greater proofs of a fertile and well-stored mind than Plutarch, but he wants that arrangement and regularity which are requisite to avoid fatiguing the attention of his readers, and yet, on the other hand, he is free from that tiresome excess of method which is so perplexing in Aristotle and his disciples, who split and divide things from the desire of being accurate, till they have hardly any meaning whatever.

Tho' it is the fashion of the present day to reprobate the study of the learned languages, yet, for my own part, considering the many excellent works they contain, and that they are the pure source from whence all modern wisdom springs, I should rather wish they were more studied, for they must always suffer by a translation. From reading Plutarch alone, much advantage might be derived, and

*on the stud
of the
dead
language*

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I see no harm that could possibly happen, if many of our gentry who now employ themselves in gaming, driving, and other idle diversions, were to spend their time in study, moderately diversified with wholesome exercise. Notwithstanding the disadvantage to which Plutarch must appear in an English dress, I will, for the sake of those who are desirous of forming some idea of his morality, but are prevented from their ignorance of the language in which he wrote, attempt to translate some of the best parts of his different treatises, which may perhaps be the means of exciting those who are better qualified, to undertake a complete translation of his best moral treatises.

The whole of his tract on education deserves to be better translated than it ever has been. "Wherever it happens," says he, "that a mother cannot suckle her own children, the greatest care should be taken in providing a nurse; she should not be of the common rank, but a woman of decent manners and situation in life, for the manners of a child begin very early to be formed—youth is soft and plastic, and whatever they are taught makes a deep impression on the minds of children. When they are arrived at an age to be put under the

care of a master, we must be particularly attentive whom we choose, so that our children shall not, thro' our ignorance, be committed to servile, vulgar, or weak men; the present negligence of parents in this respect is more than ridiculous; for every other purpose and employment they pick out the very best of their slaves, but if they can find one who is a drunkard, a glutton, and good for nothing else, him they choose to take care of their children;—we ought above all things to seek out for masters who are blameless in their lives, spotless in their morals, and eminent for their knowledge; for the source and root of every thing that is valuable in life is a good education.” He then points out with great force and accuracy the motives which induce men to commit their children to insufficient teachers, and eloquently exclaims, “Good God, can any man who bears the name of father, prefer any consideration to that of the instruction of his children.” To sum up the whole at once,” says he, “the first, and midst, and last, of all things, is a good education, as the means of virtue and happiness, for compared with this, all other things are perishable, trifling, and unworthy our regard. High birth is desirable, but it is derived from our ances-

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tors; riches are valuable, but they belong to Fortune, since she takes them from those who have them, and gives them to those who have them not; and abundance of riches is a mark for slaves and flatterers to shoot at, and what is more than all, they are generally the portion of rascals. Fame is honorable, but uncertain; beauty is desirable, but it quickly fades; health is valuable, but soon changes; strength is to be wished for, but is soon destroyed by sickness or old age, and he that prides himself in his strength gives a proof of his folly, for what is the strength of man compared with that of beasts; education then is the only thing which is imperishable and divine." Where all is so excellent, it is difficult to select, yet I will venture to give a few more of his remarks on education. "As I advise parents to prefer the education of their children to every thing else, so I advise that they should choose that which is sound and solid, and keep their children as far as possible from popular levities, for that which pleases the multitude displeases the virtuous few." "With regard to the disposition of the mind, it should neither be too bold, nor timid, for the one produces impudence, and the other falls into servility; the great art is to preserve the medium in all

things." "I advise that we instruct our children in proper pursuits by reasoning and advice, and not by blows and severity, which are more suited to slaves than to free men." "It is better for the resentment of a parent to be sharp and severe, than settled and lasting, for implacability is no small proof of hatred." This treatise is the only one on general education which the ancients have left us. Xenophon has one on the education of the Spartans, and every one is acquainted with his *Cyropædia*. In the republic of Plato are instructions for education, but Plutarch is the only one who treats the subject singly, and the mode in which he has done it entitles him to the gratitude of posterity, for it contains much valuable matter, which has been since expanded and spread over a very wide surface, and were it the only treatise on the subject now extant, we need not be at a loss how to educate our children prudently and virtuously. Why it is not more attended to, and does not produce more advantage, is worth enquiry, and the answer is obvious; it is not from any deficiency in its own merits, but because it is so little known and read by those to whom education is entrusted, and because the taste of the age is so much turned to novelty,

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that very few think it worth their while to enquire what was written about education a thousand years ago. I much question whether there are an hundred parents and schoolmasters throughout the nation who ever read the book at all, and of those perhaps not ten who have ever attempted to reduce it to practice, so little disposition is there in mankind to follow good advice.

*Plutarch's
advice on
reading
the poets*

His cautions to young men in reading the poets is the next of his treatises, as they are placed in the edition of Wyttenbach, and too much can hardly be said in its praise, tho' it must be confessed that it is sometimes rather trifling, yet what he has said of poetry in general, certainly contains great truth—

Φαρμακα πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ μὲν ἔχοντα πολλὰ τε λυγρὰ.

“Poetry,” says he, “is by no means to be neglected by those who engage in the study of philosophy, but philosophy must be applied to poetry; let us accustom ourselves to seek for instruction united with pleasure, or otherwise to reject it entirely.” “The representation of wicked actions, if they are attended with shame and injury to those who commit them, does good rather than harm, and the difference between philosophy and poetry is this,—Philosophers, in giving admonition or

reproof, make use of living and actual examples, poets invent theirs for the same purpose." "Let a young man remember, when he reads the poets, that poetry is a representation of manners, morals, and men, not pure nor faultless, but composed of passions, false opinions, and ignorance, which the goodness of their disposition frequently leads them to correct." "To prepare a young man in this manner, so that he shall partake of the elevation and enthusiasm attending good actions, and feel an abomination and disgust at vicious ones, will enable him to read the poets without the slightest disadvantage; but he who admires and embraces every thing, and suffers his judgment to be enslaved by the power of a great name, like those who imitated the crookedness of Plato, and the stammering speech of Aristotle, will be perpetually in danger of doing wrong."

The treatise on Hearing, contains many *Plutarch on the* excellent observations, of which the following *Hearing* may be noted: "You who have often heard, that to follow God and to obey reason are the same things, will not consider the passing from a boy to a man to be an entire freedom from restraint, but the change of a master, and that of a hired teacher for a divine guide,

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which they who follow, alone are free; for they alone who learn to wish for what they ought, may be said to live as they wish; to follow our unrestrained, irrational appetites, is a kind of liberty which is mean and contemptible, and always attended with repentance."

The treatise, "How to distinguish between a flatterer and a friend," contains a great deal of valuable advice from one who had well studied the world.

*How to
judge of
our progress
in virtue*

"How a man may judge of his progress in virtue," is another excellent treatise, of which the following are a few of the best parts. "To despise those things which the generality of men admire, tho' worthy of contempt, requires a strong and a firm understanding." The farmer loves best to see those heads of corn which bend to the earth, because those which rise again from their lightness, are empty and good for nothing; like them too, those young men who study philosophy, and yet are empty and without weight, put on all the external appearance of wisdom in their figure, gait, and countenance, and are full of that haughtiness and contempt which spares no one."

The treatise, "How a man may derive ad-

vantage from his enemies," contains some very weak passages, in which the reasoning is bad, and the illustration worse, yet on the whole it cannot be read without some advantage and improvement.

The next treatise is that, "On having many friends." "Nothing is more contemptible, more dangerous, and a greater proof of a light mind, than hasty friendship, and yet nothing in the world is more common." The advice of Plutarch, therefore, can never be unseasonable, because it may serve to guard us against imposition, and against the effects of our own levity. "Tho' it is not requisite," says he, "that we should have only one friend, yet let there be one more dear than the rest, and like the child of our old age; a man with whom, according to the old proverb, we have eaten a bushel of salt,—not like the friends now-a-days, with whom it is enough to have dined once or twice, to have met at billiards, at tennis, at the forum, or at a tavern; for when we see a man in the house of the great and rich, who shakes hands with, and is spoken to by, a number of people, we say how happy he must be who has such a number of friends; we see also a great many flies in a large kitchen, but neither the one nor the other remain long

*Plutarch
on having
too many
friends.*

*True
Friendship*

when there is nothing to be had." "True friendship requires three things; virtue to make it honorable, familiarity to make it pleasant, and good offices to make it useful."—"The consideration that friendship must arise from congeniality of mind is the greatest preventive against contracting it suddenly."

*Plutarch
on the
death
of
Friends*

The consolatory advice of Plutarch to Apollonius on the death of his son comprehends every topic of consolation which the subject could afford. "Now," says he, "that time which brings all things to maturity, may seem to have ripened your affliction, and the disposition of your mind may seem to require the aid of your friends, I have thought it right to offer you such consolation as may tend to the remission of your grief, and put an end to vain and useless sorrow. To grieve and lament for the death of a son is a feeling that seems to have its origin in nature, and not to be in our power to control; and I do not agree with those who praise that savage, hardened apathy, which is neither natural nor useful, for it seems to deprive us of all that kindness which arises from loving and being beloved, and which above all things it is desirable to preserve. On the other hand, to be grieved beyond measure, and to nourish our grief, is

equally contrary to nature, and arises from our own mistaken notions; on this account, therefore, it should be dismissed as injurious and improper, and by no means becoming a man of prudence; but moderate sorrow is not to be reprov'd. What is there so hard and so distressing in death? Why should that which is so natural and so familiar to us be so difficult to bear? Why is it wonderful if that which is subject to be cut asunder, should be cut; if that which is liable to consume, should be consumed; if that which is formed to burn, should be burnt, or that which is corruptible, should corrupt? and when is it that we are not subject to death?"

"Some men are particularly affected by premature death; but even this admits of so much consolation, that it is found in almost every poet. Since it is uncertain whether they who die are not taken away from misfortunes, we should not lament them as deprived of all the good we expected them to have obtained."

*on premature
Death*

His precepts of health deserve our particular regard, for an attention to health is a moral duty, if our lives are of any importance to ourselves or our friends; and yet how many men do we see who, without being guilty of any vice or intemperance, hasten their death

*Plutarch
on Health*

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formation of good habits, and acting in all things so as to preserve the medium.

The moral writings of Plutarch, we are informed from his own authority, were drawn from the stores of his common-place book, and it appears that they were written loosely and without any correction; in this respect he by no means rivals Johnson, who wrote his moral essays even with less preparation; for tho' perhaps not always equal in point of matter, they are superior in composition and finishing.

The Treatise

on
Contentment

The treatise on tranquillity of mind, or contentment, tho' excellent throughout, appears to be composed of loose thoughts hastily put together.—“In violent afflictions,” says he, “nothing can contribute so much to tranquillity as to remember all the good things we have enjoyed, and by blending them with the bad to extract the bitter from the latter. Some men will say with peevish ingratitude, What have we that is so great? Let him rather recollect what have we not?—One man has glory, another comforts, another a family, another friends. Antipater the Tarsean, when he was contemplating upon his death-bed all the good that had happened him, did not forget a prosperous voyage which he once had from Cilicia

to Athens. Even common things are not to be neglected; for we should remember and rejoice that we live, that we are healthy, that we enjoy the light of the sun, that we do not suffer by war or sedition, that we possess the earth to cultivate, and that we can dispose of our time at our pleasure; and we shall the more enjoy the things that are present, if we think on those that are not, remembering how desirable health is to those that are sick; peace to those that are at war, and to him that is unknown and a stranger, to possess friends and credit; by this means we shall know how to value things when they are gone, and not to despise them when they are present." "In the Olympic games it is not allowable to conquer if we choose our antagonist, but in life we are often placed in a better state than others without any exertion of our own, and are envied ourselves rather than have cause to envy others." "When we hear other people speak contemptuously of us because we are not consuls, or officers of state, we ought to return for answer, that we think ourselves highly fortunate, for we are neither compelled to beg, to labor, nor to flatter for a living." "Let us not vilify, nor condemn nature, as having left us nothing free from the power of

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fortune, but on the contrary (knowing that there is a very small part of man which is rotten and vulnerable by her, since every thing which is excellent is in our own power, such as reputation, knowledge, virtue, which have an existence firm and incorruptible), let us with invincible boldness look towards the future, and say to fortune as Socrates said to his judges, "You may kill me, but you cannot injure me." "To him that by the power of his virtue, and his nobler part, is enabled to live happily, what can give pain or disturbance? for he may say to fortune, I defy you, I have prevented you all access to me, not by bars and locks and walls, but by reason and philosophy, which all may partake of who choose."

The treatise on Brotherly Love, among some foolish, contains many wise remarks; the same may be said of that on Affection to our Children.

Can
vice alone
make
unhappy

"Whether vice alone can make men unhappy," is a short treatise; one sentence, however deserves to be translated—"Does vice require the aid of fortune to make men unhappy? No, she neither sends against us troops of robbers, storms of hail, nor wicked judges; but she strikes the rich, the prosperous, and

the fortunate, consuming them by lusts, enflaming them with passions, wasting them with superstition, and torturing them with malice."

The subject of garrulity he has treated with great force and ability: "Philosophy," says he, "undertakes a difficult task when she pretends to cure garrulity." "The fault of not being able to hold one's tongue arises from not being able to listen." "To hear, and to be heard, are two great things which a talkative man can never acquire: other irregular desires may obtain their ends, such as avarice, vanity, and the love of pleasure, but garrulity never can; a talkative man seldom gains hearers, for every one avoids him." "No words that can be spoken are sometimes so expressive as silence; you may at a proper time tell what you have properly kept secret, but you can never keep secret what you have once told; for this reason it appears to me, that tho' men may teach us to speak, it is the gods only who can teach us to be silent." "Curiosity is the constant attendant of garrulity; but they who wish to talk much, must have something to tell, and they are particularly curious in enquiring after secrets which afford a constant subject to their babbling loquacity." "Great talkers often

*Plutarch's
Garrulity*

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betray themselves." "Barbers are generally great talkers, and most idlers fly to them to gratify their impertinent curiosity." Among the higher ranks in former times, a barber's shop was the emporium of news, it is now frequented only by the lower.

*Plutarch's
remedies
for
Garrulity*

Plutarch has suggested several remedies for garrulity, few of which, I doubt, can ever be of use, for it is a disease which generally arises from a want which can never be supplied. "Let us," says he, "always avoid to answer, when a question is asked of another." "Some men talk from a desire of shewing their knowledge; one because he has read history, another because he has studied grammar, and a third because he has travelled; but this ought to be avoided, for garrulity is thus ensnared as animals are, by that kind of meat of which they are the fondest." Curiosity being nearly allied to garrulity, is the next subject treated. "Whenever," says he, "we perceive ourselves affected by turbulent passions, which bring storms and darkness over the mind we should endeavor by expelling and rooting them out, to restore tranquillity and sun-shine to the breast, but if we cannot succeed in that at once, we should give a different turn to them, to render them more harmless. For instance, curiosity,

*on
improvement
of the mind*

which is often only an impertinent desire of being acquainted with other people's faults, and neither free from envy nor malice, should be transferred from without, and turned inwardly, and if you are pleased to hear a recital of faults, you will find sufficient employment at home, in surveying the errors of your life, the passions of your soul, and your wilful neglect of duties various and important." "A curious man," says Plutarch, "is of more use to his enemies than himself, for he brings their faults to light, and shews them what they ought to do, and what to avoid, while he neglects every thing relating to his own concerns from his great anxiety about those of another."

"The great remedy for trifling curiosity is to turn our attention to things of moment; study and enquire into the great operations of nature, or if your mind is not sufficiently exalted for this, examine the records of history, or pry into the anecdotes of antiquity, cull plants and flowers, or gather shells, stones, and butterflies, rather than be troublesome to your acquaintance; and if you must be employed, let it be innocently." The advice of Plutarch, tho' excellent, is hardly practicable by those who have long formed contrary habits, for to people advanced in life, it is difficult to change

*remedy
for
trifling
curiosity.*

their pursuits, but young ones may be taught to amuse themselves even with trifles, so as to avoid being troublesome or offensive.

ice Avarice is a vice even of the greatest minds, tho' it ought to find residence only in the least. Plutarch has a treatise which admirably displays its whole deformity. "Money," says he, "cannot purchase quiet, magnanimity, fortitude, content, nor constancy, neither can riches carry with them contempt of riches, nor the possession of superfluities make men satisfied with moderate enjoyment. From what evil then can riches liberate us, if not from avarice; the desire of drinking may be quenched by drinking, and gluttony may be satisfied with eating, but neither gold nor silver can quench the thirst for money, nor can avarice ever be satisfied." "Some will pretend that they are keeping up money for their children or their heirs, tho' they give them not a farthing while they live; such men are like mice eating up the earth that contains particles of gold, which can never be recovered till the mice are killed." A sufficient specimen has now been given of the morality of Plutarch, sufficient, I trust, to induce those who have perused thus much to refer to the original source for a more copious draught.

The next philosopher who deserves our attention is Marcus Antoninus, and a more singular spectacle is hardly to be found in the history of mankind than that of a mild, benevolent philosopher, seated on the throne of the most extensive empire the world ever saw, when that empire was overwhelmed by tyranny and luxury. Antoninus undertook to cleanse the Augean stable of the state, but neither the stream of philosophy, nor even the stream of the Alpheus, was sufficient to purify such accumulated corruption,—no single man was equal to the task, and tho' he succeeded for a time in reviving a spirit of purity and patriotism among the degenerate Romans, yet almost in his life-time that spirit became extinct, and the succeeding reign of his son Commodus was even more profligate and nefarious than any of those who preceded him. The philosophy of Antoninus, tho' professedly founded on the model of the Stoics, resembled more nearly that of Socrates, than the stern, unaccommodating precepts of Zeno; his greatest error seems to have been that of thinking too well of mankind; he considered the soul of every man to be an emanation from the Deity, and tho' sometimes capable of being debased by passion and vice, yet in its nature

*The System
of
Antoninus
Pius.*

*His op
of the
Soul.*

essentially good ; this led him to suppose men better than they are, and not sufficiently to consider them the creatures of circumstances, but more under the power of virtuous principles than they have hitherto been found ; this opinion blinded him to the vices of his son and his wife, and prevented him from treating them as they deserved. No man was more fully sensible of the duties of a monarch than this pious emperor ; he regarded his power as a trust delegated to him by providence for the good of his people, and every action of his life and government seemed to result from this principle ; he was not only a teacher of morality, but a practical moralist ; he was on the whole rather a good, than a great man, for he wanted that firmness of conduct which enables a man to rule an empire, and shewed that it is almost impossible for kings to be philosophers, or philosophers to be kings, according to the refined sentiment of Plato. He was much fitter to instruct men than to command them ; for such is the weakness of human nature, that it is almost impossible that one man should excel in more than one art.

The Dark

The long night of ignorance which succeeded the fall of the Roman empire in the West, hardly produced one moral writing which was

worthy to be transmitted to posterity ; the only guides of benighted reason, were school divinity and barbarous metaphysics,—a blaze of light now and then burst forth, which was soon overwhelmed by the darkness that surrounded, and till printing gave stability to the efforts of industry and genius, knowledge could not long keep its ground against ignorance.—

A few men at different times arose, who with almost intuitive wisdom, formed just notions of the nature of virtue, and the moral relations of society ; among these the most distinguished was Alfred, the honor of the human race, who did more to civilize a rude people than any other single man at any period ; he dispersed among the multitude such apologues and fables as were to be found in the Saxon tongue, and translated the fables of Æsop—a proof that he considered morality of considerable importance. To him, after a long interval, followed the illustrious John of Salisbury, in the reign of Henry II. a man who having, in that comparatively dark period, cultivated his mind by the study of the Greek and Roman classics, had formed just notions on the nature of man, in his moral and social capacity, and has left in his writings some splendid proofs of the extent of his knowledge, and the pro-

*Alfred
the
great*

*John of
Salisbury*

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priety of his sentiments, on various subjects of literature and morality. To him succeeded a gloom almost impenetrable, till the restoration of learning in Italy diffused a gentle gleam of light over the moral and political hemisphere. Petrarch; more renowned for his splendid poetry, than for his dull prose, threw a faint glimmer of his enlightened mind on the long neglected topic of morality; and Poggio Bracciolini scattered through his writings many moral precepts, which, tho' neither new nor profound, were of general utility. The termination of the fifteenth century produced the first moral writer, who emancipating himself from scholastic and theological subtleties, professedly undertook to treat on morals as a separate branch of study; this great man was Matteo Bosso, the principal of the monastery of Tiesole. Nearly cotemporary with him, was Pontanus, well known for his boasting monitory epitaph; his treatise de Obedientia contains an excellent summary of moral duty, and his book de Principe should be read by all sovereigns who wish to understand the nature of their sacred office. The author treats of politics as a branch of morals, a light in which they are very seldom considered.

The philosophy of Montaigne was of the

De haach

Bosso

Pontanus

*Montaigne's
Epicurean
System*

gay and epicurean sort; he loved pleasure and he loved life, yet his pleasure was not inconsistent with virtue; nor did his love of life render him a prey to the fear of death, for no man took greater pains to reason himself out of that natural fear than Montaigne. The longest chapter in his book is upon that subject; he has said a great deal upon it, but not more to the purpose than Plutarch in his *Consolatio ad Apollonium*. Montaigne and Charron were cotemporaries, and there is some resemblance in their writings where the latter copied the former. Montaigne thought and wrote like a philosopher, and Charron too often with the prejudices of a priest; yet tho' he professed that contempt of worldly vanities peculiar to religious bigotry and unworthy of philosophical liberality, he was in many respects so superior to the groveling notions of his profession as to excite the spleen and resentment of his priestly brethren, who, because he did not adopt all the follies of their creed, called him heretic, infidel, and atheist. His morality is of the purest temper, yet his scholastic divisions, founded neither in reason nor in fact, perplex his subject, and render him tedious and dry. The first chapter of his book is worth many volumes; it describes, with a profound know-

*Contrasted
with
Charron*

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ledge of the human heart, the true causes of self-ignorance.—Montaigne gives us nothing but a heap of loose reflections without method or arrangement. Charron contains regular and systematic advice; he considers the senses as the origin of all our knowledge, v. cap. 12. and the immortality of the soul, tho' generally believed, to be very feebly proved, cap. 16. a position which gave great offence to religionists. His estimate of human life, tho' a little too deeply colored, is in general accurate and just, v. cap. 26. The 2d chapter of the 2d book, on liberty of mind and sentiment, contains a strong lesson against bigotry and prejudice. Chapter 4th is an admirable piece of moral advice. Chapter 5th, on religion, shews that however his mind was narrowed in some points by religious particularities, yet his general sentiments were free and noble, and his religion of no sect but that of God. It was this chapter which naturally raised him so many enemies, and cost him the persecution of sectarian bigots and fanatic priests. The second volume is a complete manual of moral and political wisdom, and the whole is a treasure of inestimable price.

*Bacon's
Essays*

The **Essays** of the great Lord Bacon are an epitome of wisdom, inasmuch as they contain

the reflections of a man who had thought more deeply and seen more of human affairs than most other men of any age or period, yet they are disfigured by the fault of the times in which he lived, by a certain affected quaintness and fondness for similies, which left nothing in nature without a resemblance; so that were the dross of these essays to be separated from the pure gold, they might be compressed into half their present size, and yet leave enough to form an admirable manual of practical advice.

La Bruyere has few general principles of morality; he paints individuals, not the species, nor their vices and virtues; there is a monotony in him which is always tedious, and sometimes disgusting: his characters are generally drawn from life, but he refines too much, like our philosophic historians, upon motives, and is too strongly tinctured with the misanthropic philosophy of Rochefoucault to be a pleasant companion, tho' he may sometimes be an useful one: he is most at home when he is painting the vices and follies of mankind, and seems to have little pleasure in their virtues. He resembles Moliere in his delicate touch of characters; but tho' he shews them by description, he perhaps could not have made them

*La Bruyere's
Ethics.*

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describe themselves like Moliere; his expressions are equally strong and delicate, and there is a forcible conciseness in his manner, which comes home to the fancy and the feelings more suddenly than pages of labored disquisition. It is evident that he had studied Montaigne and Charron very deeply; he is indeed a great borrower. Theophrastus he professes to have been his master, and Accarias de Serione, the French translator of Publius Syrus, has found many of his sentences to have been almost literally translated from that concise moralist.

reviewed La Bruyere, as a moral writer, has not the merit of giving general descriptions of vice and virtue, which are equally true at all times and in all nations; he drew the manners and the characters of his own times, and of them perhaps he has given a faithful copy; but his portraits resemble too much those pictures which, being dressed in the fashion of the times, lose much of their merit in a future age, and have nothing in them like nature but the complexion and features, which can hardly be disguised. His general reflections, however, apply to all times and seasons, and are admirable for their depth and solidity. The greatest fault of La Bruyere is one which per-

vades his whole book, and without which he perhaps could never have written; the loose and unconnected nature of his reflections prevents him from ever being read for any length of time together; we take him up and lay him down again after a few sentences, for it is impossible to keep up the attention of the mind, any more than the attention of the eye, to objects which are perpetually moving. La Bruyere however contains a valuable stock of materials which may be expanded and spread over a wider surface by future writers on the subject of morality.

The immortal pages of Addison next claim attention, and tho' they are now not so frequently in the hands of all ranks as they were forty years ago, yet they will never cease to be admired while the English language continues in any degree of purity: the simple elegance of his stile, and the delicacy of his humor, are however his principal claims to be admired, for his morality is merely common-place, and his religion is narrowed by the spirit of a sect; it is not the religion of nature. There is no strength nor energy either in his thoughts or his language; all is pure, equitable, and elegant, but it is the simplicity of nature without any foreign ornament. The

*addison's
moral
essay*

Spectator.

great estimation in which Addison was formerly held, above what his writings entitle him to, is to be attributed to the time at which he wrote, and the nature of his compositions; before his time, reading was limited to a very small number, but the appearance of the Spectator, by its convenient and diurnal form, induced those to read who could hardly spell, and taught the belles and beaux of the time to seek for information blended with amusement. The Spectator was succeeded by a great number of such papers, which scattered morality among the multitude, and formed a new set of readers who aimed at being wise without pursuing the deep investigations of science, and acquiring a kind of every-day knowledge, which was cheaply obtained and widely extended. The merit of Addison in thus diffusing wisdom and amusement, which had formerly been locked up in ponderous folios, entitles him to a high rank among the improvers of mankind; but had he succeeded Johnson or Hawksworth it is probable his reputation would have been considerably less than it is, from the priority of his appearance; for certainly his merits as an instructive moralist are far inferior to these writers. Perhaps, however, it is well that he came before

them, for to induce a habit of reading, with men, as with children, it is requisite to begin with lighter compositions first, and then ascend to those which are more grave and solid. The mind, like the body in its infant state, must first be fed with light food till it can digest that which is more strong and heavy. The most that Addison did was to put the common topics of morality in an agreeable dress, to expand the concise sentences of Solomon, and Jesus the son of Sirach into a more diffuse manner, and enliven the dry stile of advice by the animating delineation of characters, and the recital of stories and allegories; in this he succeeded so far in inducing the generality of people to read, that his merits will never be forgotten by the moralist, and his beauties will ever be held in estimation by the man of taste; he has not instructed us so much by telling us what we are, as what we ought to be, and his characters are perhaps less true to nature than to the times in which he lived. Such men as Honeycomb and Will Wimble are now hardly to be found. His views of man are neither new nor extensive, yet as far as they go, they are bright and pleasing; it was not his wish, nor his temper to give a gloomy picture of life or morality; he is always cheerful, benevolent,

rienced at different periods of his life, some bright gleams of comfort and enjoyment. The fault of Johnson's writings is not that of inducing despondency and culpable apathy; for setting aside his religious prejudices, no man did more to strengthen and support the cause of virtue, and keep the world in subjection to the strongest moral principles. It cannot be said that he did much to extend the boundaries of knowledge, or to throw any new lights either on morality or metaphysics. He left the world pretty much as he found it, and for him it was certainly no worse; the age in which he lived was not an age of discovery; the maxim of the times was "*Stare super vias antiquas*," to keep things as they were, rather than endeavor to improve. The greatest fault of Johnson's writings is the pomposity and inflation of his style, which served to conceal from common readers the most common thoughts, and give an air of dignity to trifles; his conversation was indebted to the same pomposity for its imposing effect, and those whom he did not convince, he could always confound. If we divest the greatest part of his writings of their turgid language, he will be reduced to the level of every-day writers, because writing to him was a mere mechanical habit, which seldom

more by pompous phrases, than by accuracy of language or depth of thought: yet, with all his faults, no man will deny that his writings contain a fund of useful information for those who wish to be previously prepared for a knowledge of the world, and with proper cautions they may be read by all ranks and ages with infinite profit and delight.

A more amiable, and, in general, a more useful moralist, than Johnson, is to be found among the crowd of his imitators.—Dr Knox has acquired a well-deserved reputation for the earnestness and apparent sincerity of his manner, for the elegance of his stile, and the variety of his classical knowledge. His principles, where they are not narrowed by his religion, are manly, honest, and independent; they are dignified and spirited, without being surly, and tend to form the minds of young men to an admiration of every thing that is great and noble, and a contempt of every thing mean and dishonest. I hardly think it possible to name any periodical moralist whose writings may be read with greater advantage by young men, than the two volumes of Dr Knox's Essays; they breathe every thing that is classical, liberal, and spirited, and they will do more to form the rising generation to prin-

*Dr Knox's
Essays*

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ciples of honesty and independence, than any other single performance which can be mentioned. I speak only of their morality, for their religion is that of sectarian bigotry.

*on the
several
heaven
philosophers*

The Grecian philosophers, whose writings have come down to us, all agreed about the end of virtue, tho' they differed about its nature, and there is not one of them whose life was either impure or dishonest; they all preserved their existence to extreme old age, and gave examples of patience and temperance, which were the best proofs of the merit of their doctrines. It is impossible to relate the endless and minute variety of their opinions on the nature of the sovereign good, yet it is sufficient to say, that they differed little on essentials, and all seemed to obtain that happiness which was the professed end of their search, a fact sufficient to convince us, that provided the means we employ are virtuous, it matters not in what our supreme good consists, and that we ought to be liberal and indulgent to others for slight differences, when we are certain that their actions tend to the same good purpose. The generality of these philosophers blended metaphysical enquiry with practical advice, thus endeavoring, at the same time, to gratify the curiosity

and improve the morals of their readers and hearers, to elevate them above mere sensual pursuits, and advance them in learning, virtue, and every true enjoyment.

The metaphysical divinity of Plato demands *on Plato's*
no share of my attention in the enquiry I have *Metaphys.*
proposed; I respect the purity of his life, and
admire the sublimity of his imagination, but I
regard his doctrines among the number of
those splendid fictions, which have seduced
the reason of mankind, without increasing
their virtue; for I find the morality of Socrates,
who affirmed nothing, and of Epicurus, who
denied every thing which concerned these
metaphysical reveries, equally pure and use-
ful with that of Plato, who held the most
unintelligible doctrines on the nature of the
soul and the divinity.—Plato has contributed
more than any other ancient writer to deceive
mankind, as to their own and the divine na-
ture; from him we derive many of our ridicu-
lous notions of spirits and of angels. He was
a man of lively imagination, and had his mind
been turned to poetry rather than philosophy,
he might have amused and improved the
world without deluding it; there are, however,
many passages in his writings, particularly in
his *Timæus*, where he seems to have been un-

able to separate the idea of a God, from that of the universe, and it was the same with most of the other Grecian philosophers, as may be seen both in their own works and in Cicero de *Natura Deorum*. Plato was not content to deduce our capacity for virtue, from the acknowledged and visible powers of man, he looked for a higher source, and fancied he found it in considering the soul as an emanation of the divinity; which, being endowed with all imaginable excellence, imparted a portion of that excellence to its derivatives. Virtue, therefore, according to him, was not to be tried by the standard of utility, but by a standard of imaginary excellence which existed in the mind antecedent to its connexion with the body, and had existed from all eternity in the mind of the Deity. The conception is sublime, but the deduction is not susceptible of proof; it may be sufficient to convince a Platonist, whose imagination is fascinated by the alluring idea of a species of moral beauty independent of human actions, existing in the grand prototype of excellence, but let him remember, that all this magnificent parade of virtue depends only on idea, and that tho' the test of utility is derived from a humbler origin, it is capable of positive demonstration, and affords a motive adapted to

every rank of society. The divine origin, and consequent immortality of the soul, was the source of Plato's morality, yet it differed not in many respects from that of others, who looked not to so exalted a motive. Plato considered the end of virtue to consist in acquiring a resemblance to the Deity, and that vice was a debasement of our divine original; that the means of virtue were to be found in our corporeal endowments, in health, strength, and the exercise of the sensual faculties, and in the external advantages of riches, power, and family, yet that without these, a virtuous man might be happy. He maintained that no man should refuse the public offices of the state, except when he saw that the people were so lost in corruption as to be incapable of amendment; that every man should marry, and that he should adhere strictly to the laws which are established, but if he thought them pernicious, he should strive to have them improved. Virtue, he defined to be that which is laudable, reasonable, useful, decorous, and consistent, agreeable to nature and propriety, and capable of being proved. He distinctly separated the goods of the mind from those of the body; the former he called justice, prudence, fortitude, and temperance; the lat-

with the body; from the due government of these by the reason, arise the four cardinal virtues, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Power he divided into five sorts, legislative, natural, customary, elective, and violent. He divided the goods of life into three sorts, viz. those which we possess alone, and those which can be participated, and those which can subsist by themselves. Counsel he defines to be of three kinds, which relate to the past, to the future, and the present. The morality of Plato has many claims to our regard, superior to those of any other sage of antiquity, for tho' mixed with his metaphysics, it is plain, distinct, and intelligible. He places virtue not in any single quality, but in a union of many, and depending upon various powers; his theology endeared him to the fathers of the church, tho' they pretend it is his morality they admire; the softness of his manners, the elegance of his language, and the variety of his knowledge, contributed, during his lifetime, to gain him many disciples, and tho' his divinity and his metaphysics could be admired only because they are unintelligible,*

* Gibbon iii. 325.

yet his morality, which he derived chiefly from Socrates, was level to the meanest capacity, and was calculated for the noblest purposes, to elevate, refine, and purify our nature, to keep the passions within their due limit, without destroying them, like the Stoics, or giving them too great a sway, like the pretended Epicureans. To this it is probably owing that the sect of Platonic philosophers has continued so long in the world, and is not even yet extinct, tho' few in number.

*Aristotle's
Ethics*

The morality of Aristotle is more independent of his metaphysics than that of Plato, yet there is a precision, a neatness, and a conciseness in his manner of expressing himself in all his writings, which, tho' it shews the regularity and profundity of his mind, is apt to be obscure to those who have not been accustomed to the same closeness and accuracy of reasoning.—Tho' he has none of the extravagancies of Plato, yet he has subtleties of his own which are sometimes equally unintelligible. If Plato errs from the exuberance of his imagination, the fault of Aristotle is in the excess of his reason; if Plato wanted judgment, Aristotle wanted fire, and nothing can be more opposite than their manner of conveying their instruction,—the one seeks for, and employs, all the

graces and ornaments of stile ; the other only delights in the dry subtleties of argument ; the one dazzles by his brilliancy, the other confounds by an excessive arrangement. The splendid paradoxes of Plato are not more perplexing to the mind than the tedious divisions and subdivisions of Aristotle. The one for ever labors to shine, the other wearies himself and his readers in striving to convince ; they are neither of them adapted to common students, and therefore neither of them calculated for general utility. The morality of Aristotle resembled in many respects that of his master Plato, and he has left behind him more aphorisms, which arises from his sententious manner of conveying his sentiments. " The root of science," he said, " is bitter, but the fruit is sweet." " There is the same difference," said he, " between an ignorant and a learned man, as between a living body and a dead carcase." " Friendship, he called, one soul in two bodies." Men must either be much altered since the time of Aristotle, or he must have formed romantic notions of friendship, for according to his definition of it, I doubt whether any such thing exists. Long acquaintance is often called friendship, and so is familiarity, but they are very different things. Let us look

thro' the world and see if any man will sacrifice his own comfort and convenience to that of his friend. People may shake hands and be very glad to see each other, and shew a number of little kindnesses that cost nothing, but that is not friendship. There may be such a thing as friendship, but I have never found it, tho' I have sought it at the expence of many sacrifices. "Nothing is so soon forgotten as kindness."—"Hope is a waking dream." "Let us be friends of Socrates, friends of Plato, but most the friends of truth." "Polite literature is the greatest ornament of prosperity, and the best consolation in adversity." "Philosophy teaches us to do that voluntarily which other men do by constraint." "All virtue is placed in the medium." Being asked what a man gained by telling a lie, he answered, "Not to be believed when he tells the truth." "A good person," he said, "was better than a letter of recommendation." "Parents who gave their children a good education," he said, "deserved to be honored much more than those who merely begot them; for the one only gave them life, while the other gave them the means of living."—To a man who boasted of belonging to an illustrious city, he said, "Consider first whether you are worthy of it."—Being asked

how we ought to behave ourselves towards our friends, he answered, "In the same manner we expect them to behave to us." "He who has many friends has none." Being reproached with having given money to a man who did not deserve it, he answered, "I did not give it to the man, but to humanity." These maxims alone, which were delivered to his disciples, and are recorded by Diogenes Laertius, are sufficient to immortalize him, and outweigh all his metaphysical subtleties, and all the splendid reveries of Plato. It was the object of Pyrrho to free the mind from all perturbation by subduing the passions, and disengaging the reason from all metaphysical discussions, and therefore he attempted to prove that nothing could be proved, and he has gone very far to do so. The work of Sextus Empiricus, which contains his opinion, deserves to be read by every man addicted to the study of philosophy.

His system of morality remains now to be considered. He did not extend his notions of virtue to the extravagant pitch of the Stoics, nor even of Plato. He considered the senses to be the criterion of truth in external things, and the mind in things relating to moral, and the end of all our energies to be the practice of virtue in a well spent life ; by this single axiom

*aristotle's
morality
considered*

he opened the road to a practical system of philosophy, which has effected a complete revolution in metaphysics and moral science.— Happiness he held to be composed of three things, viz. those of the mind, those of the body, and the goods of fortune; for virtue alone, he said, could not constitute happiness, when so many other things are requisite; let a man be never so wise he cannot be happy if he is in distress and poverty. How opposite is *this* to the doctrine of the Stoics! and yet the truth of each must depend on such a variety of circumstances as to render it impossible to lay down any general principle.— He divided the life of man into two kinds, active and contemplative, and was blameable for giving too great preference to the former. Vice he maintained to be sufficient to create misery, tho' surrounded with all worldly enjoyment. He was of opinion that the virtues did not follow each other naturally, for a man might be prudent and just, and yet weak and intemperate. A virtuous man, he said, was not free from all perturbations, but from the most violent. Virtue he defined not to consist so much in just notions as in habits, which required a great length of time and much industry to form, and with regard to

himself, no man was more indefatigable; he afforded a striking example against the dangerous custom of being content with superficial notions on any subject, for he studied every thing deeply. To detail all his opinions on the nature of morality, is by no means requisite; from what has been said, a general idea of his system may be formed. Of all the ancient philosophers, perhaps none is more talked of and less known than Pyrrho. He is considered as the father of scepticism, and scepticism with some people is a name for every thing that is wicked and bad, and yet a better man than Pyrrho hardly ever lived.—v. p. 230.

The character and philosophy of Epicurus have been more grossly misunderstood than those of any of his cotemporaries; he was calumniated in his life-time by those who envied his fame, and after his death by those who mistook his principles; yet there is hardly one among them whose conduct was more rational, or his morality more pure and simple.

A few words may be said of his life as illustrative of his doctrines. He began the study of philosophy in his fourteenth year, and adopted the notions of Democritus, from a sudden dissatisfaction at the ignorance of a grammarian; having asked him what the chaos of

*The Philosophy
of Epicurus
recovered*

of his life

Hesiod meant, he answered, that he could not tell,—and immediately the inquisitive youth sought for information from better sources, and began to read the books of Democritus, who taught that the origin of all things was from the fortuitous concourse of atoms, and that nothing else with certainty could be affirmed; that all things were produced and conducted by necessity, and that the enjoyment of human life consisted in a right and quiet state of mind, which, tho' not positively pleasure, was a state in which the mind is happy by its • calmness and tranquillity, and the freedom from fear, from superstition, and every other perturbation. Having travelled into different countries to acquire knowledge, he fixed after all at Athens, and in his two and thirtieth year, opened a school of philosophy, which was soon thronged with scholars, and never after empty; such was the soothing gentleness and affability of his manners, the attractive nature of his doctrines, and the easy familiarity which prevailed through the whole society. He reprobated the practice of Pythagoras in exacting from his friends a community of goods, as seeming to shew a distrust of their attachment. He used no pomp nor artifice in delivering his doctrines, there was no ostentatious display of

wisdom or power, but the utmost sincerity and simplicity prevailed in all he said, did, and thought. His school was in the midst of a large and beautiful garden, enriched by nature, and adorned by art. He spent a long life in the most tranquil serenity and enjoyment, except when interrupted by violent attacks of the stone, which at length, by a stoppage in his bladder, put a period to his existence in the seventy-third year of his age, after suffering fourteen days of exquisite agony; his last words were an exhortation to his disciples to be mindful of his precepts. His followers were numerous, and so were his writings, for he is said to have left behind him three hundred rolls, or volumes, of which all that have been preserved are, his will, and a few of his letters, the last of which contain some of his physics, his astronomy, and his morals; with the two first I have little concern, the last I intend to abridge, and also his maxims selected from his other writings, by Diogenes Laertius. I will then compare his morality with that of other philosophers, and leave my readers to determine on his merits, and how far he deserves all the obloquy that has been thrown on him. His letter to Manæceas is to the following purport:—

*accused
elder to
sanctify*

"Let no man neglect to seek after wisdom in his youth, nor be tired of it when he is old; whoever says that the time for it is either past or not come, must say, that the time to be happy is either past or not arrived; we ought then at all times to study our happiness, for having this, we have all things. All that I have continually advised you, practice and think upon, viz. That a god is a being incorruptible and happy: think of him as such, and no otherwise; for there are gods, and the proof of their existence is evident, but they are not such as men figure them, neither is he impious who denies their being, but he who thinks of them unworthily."

*accused
need an
interfering
presence*

Having elsewhere maintained, that the gods being by their exalted nature, removed from all concern or interference in the affairs of the world, it naturally followed, that he did not think they required our worship, or communicated their will by divination or oracular response. "I advise you," says he, "to consider death as a matter of no concern to us, for all good and evil is in our perceptions, and death is the extinction of all feeling and perception; to despise death is to enjoy life, and instead of adding eternity to it, we ought to take away the desire of immortality, for no-

death

thing in life can be terrible to him who believes that there is nothing terrible in ceasing to exist. He is a fool, then, who dreads death, not as a present, but as a future evil ; and this most frightful of all calamities is in truth nothing, for where we are, death is not, and where death is, we are not ; he is neither with the dead nor the living, and is therefore—nothing. While some men fly from death as the greatest of evils, others seek for him as a release from their sorrows ; but a philosopher neither dreads to part with life, for he knows he has not the power of living, nor does he think death to be an evil, and measures life not by its length, but by its enjoyment. We must remember that our wants are partly natural and partly artificial, and of the natural some are indispensable, as those relating to the welfare of the body, and the tranquillity of the mind, which are the principal means of living happily ; for the great rule of life is to avoid pain and procure pleasure, and all good or evil is to be measured by this standard.—We should look upon content as the greatest good on earth, not that it is requisite we should have only a little to live upon, but when we *have* only a little, we should be satisfied, for this reason, that they best enjoy abundance

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who are content with least, and simple fare can give a relish equal to the greatest luxuries, when the pains of poverty are removed ; for bread and water are luxury to him who is in positive want ; to accustom ourselves, therefore, to simple food, is the sure means of health, and renders us equal to all the active duties of life, better prepared also for sumptuous entertainments when they come, and fearless of the frowns of fortune. When we say, then, that pleasure is the end of life, we do not mean the pleasures of debauchery, or those which consist in gross enjoyment, as some have ignorantly, or intentionally, or maliciously, misinterpreted our meaning ; for it is not feasts and revellings, nor the other pleasures of the senses, which make life pleasant and desirable, but the sober exertions of reason which enquires into the nature of things to be desired or avoided, and banishes error and doubt. Prudence is the first of virtues, for no man can live happily who does not live prudently, honorably, and justly, and the reverse is equally true. The virtues are naturally allied to happiness, and happiness to virtue, for who can be superior to him who thinks justly of the gods, who has no terrors of death, and conceives it to be the termination



of his existence? who thinks that the goods of this life are easy to be procured, and the evils of short duration, that necessity is accountable to no one, and that fortune is fickle and unsteady? Meditate on these things day and night, by yourself, and with your friends, and you will never be disturbed, not even in a dream. You will enjoy perpetual tranquillity, and live like a god among men. For a man who is perpetually conversant with the blessings which reason can bestow, seems to be superior to the rest of mankind."

The most remarkable of his maxims which are not contained in the foregoing letter are as follow :—"A philosopher, by the exertion of his reason, may overcome all the injuries of mankind, whether arising from hatred, envy, or contempt; he will never trouble himself with public affairs, he will take care never to be reduced to poverty, nor ever be unmindful of the future; he will love to live in the country, he will resist the attacks of fortune, and he will always be so careful of reputation as to avoid being despised." He denied that all offences were equal, and said that bravery was not natural, but the effect of reason. He said that friendship was earnestly to be sought for, and consisted in a similiarity of pleasures; that

*the power
of Philosophy*

happiness was of two sorts, that of the gods, which admits of no diminution nor increase, and that of men, which consisted in the number and degree of our pleasures; that a philosopher will not be disturbed if another is thought wiser than himself; and that such a man ought even to die for a friend;* that virtue was to be sought after, not for itself, but for the pleasures it bestowed; that the desires of nature are easily defined, and easily satisfied, while those of vanity are infinite; that a philosopher is not in the power of fortune; that the pleasures of sense after the removal of hunger are not increased, but varied, and that no evil that man can suffer is either eternal or of long continuance. Diodorus the Sicilian tells us that he published a book called *General Maxims* in which he says, That a life spent according to the principles of justice must be free from perturbation, an opinion which the historian highly extols, and thinks sufficient to preserve the peace of the world, for "injustice" says he, "is the metropolis of evils, and causes the greatest calamity, not only to individuals but to kings and nations."—Diod. Sic. l. 25, c. i.

* Vide Cicer. de Div. 103. defin. 1. Athen. lib. 12. § 345.

The long calumniated philosophy of Epicurus has here been fairly represented from the most authentic memorial which antiquity hath left us--his life by Diogenes Laertius, and it now remains to examine what are its merits, and what are its faults. The greatest praise which it deserves, is that of plainness and practical utility. It contains no refined and useless speculations on the nature of virtue or the duties of man; no romantic notions of happiness, incompatible with the present state of our existence, or the enjoyment of the goods of nature. Our senses are declared to be the inlets to happiness and knowledge, and pleasure the end of our existence. Such doctrines, tho' they may not accord with the high-flown Platonic notions of the soul, as a separate essence, nor with the Stoical reveries on the beauty of virtue and the contempt of pain, are proved by practical experience to be conformable to the actual state of things. Let any man enquire of himself, whether he has certainty of any thing that is not conveyed to him by his senses, and whether the desire of obtaining pleasure, and avoiding pain, is not the first motive of all his actions; it is only requisite, in order to fix his happiness on a solid basis, that his pleasures should be pure, rational, and moderate, and

*Estimate
of the
Epicurean
System*

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then who will say, that virtue itself is not sought for on account of the internal satisfaction it is capable of producing. Such philosophy is supported by facts, which are the strongest of all evidence, for every thing else rests only on uncertain speculation and vain conjecture.

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Having laid down these two principles, that the senses are the only means of knowledge, that pleasure is our greatest good, and pain our greatest evil, the life which follows must be conformable to reason, and productive of happiness, consisting in the enjoyments of sense, regulated by the control of prudence; in the full exercise of our rational faculties, so as to keep our minds free from doubt and error, from vain fancies and groundless terrors, from unworthy notions of ourselves or others, and to qualify us for the enjoyment of social intercourse in its highest state of refinement, enlivened by wit and humor, and endeared by the confidence of virtuous friendship. Our happiness also must result from the exercise of our minds and fortunes to promote the good of others, in extending their comforts, enlightening their understanding, and relieving their misery. The man who lives according to these principles, tho' he may now

and then be disturbed by the intervention of physical evil, cannot be rendered miserable either by the frowns of fortune or the severity of pain; and it must also be remarked, that misfortune is frequently only another name for imprudence, and that it is much easier to prevent bodily pain, by the constant control of our irregular appetites and passions, than to relieve it by all the efforts of medicine and surgery. A life spent in conformity to the exertions of unclouded reason, is all that mortals can pretend to, for immortality is as little in our power as existence was before our birth; and a due mixture of sensual and rational enjoyment seems to be most suited to our mixed nature. The faults of this philosophy (for no system is without faults), are few compared to those of others, and they arise rather from the state of the world, than from any vice inherent in the system. It is said, and with great truth, that the philosophy of Epicurus is of too refined a nature for the commerce of the world, because it withdraws men too much from any interference in public affairs, and tends too much to what may be called a life of indolence. It may also be justly reproached with being practicable only by the rich and middle ranks of life, to the total exclusion of the poor,

*The defects
of the
Epicurean
Philosophy*

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for it supposes a certain degree of affluence in its professors, and takes very little notice of the passive virtues of patience and self-denial. The philosophy of Epicurus is a philosophy for a gentleman, but not for a mechanic or a peasant; for tho' temperance and frugality are every where recommended, I doubt whether an Epicurean is well suited to struggle with want and poverty: it may be of great use in regulating the conduct, and purifying the pleasures of the rich and prosperous, but it is not a philosophy for the unfortunate. Many other faults of lesser importance have been imposed on the Epicurean system, but most of these have arisen either from a mistake of the words or the sense: of the latter, the most material are two maxims which are said to give room for a considerable extent of iniquity. In the first, he is supposed to say, "Power, however obtained, is lawful, on account of the violence of men to each other;" and this axiom is believed to sanction every species of usurpation or illegitimate authority. I do not by any means understand this to be the sense of the passage; if the axiom had stood simply by itself, there could have been no doubt of its immoral tendency, but for the reason given, viz. the violence of men, I suppose he

must have meant, that any government is better than none. The other maxim which has given offence is this, "That no pleasure in itself is criminal, but the efficient part of many pleasures causes more pain than gratification."— Here again he has saved himself by giving a reason, for as he said before, that virtue is not to be admired for itself, but for the pleasure it produces, so vice is not detestable but for its bad consequences; and this is in fact the truth, if we were able to divest ourselves of the effects of habit and prejudice. We detest vice on account of its ill effects, and therefore we connect with it an idea of deformity. It is well that we should do so, it is a prejudice from which no ill can arise, but when we speak of facts, we must allow that all actions are indifferent to those who are unacquainted with their consequences, and so far Epicurus is not to be condemned; he has taken a view of things in their naked state, and it is right that they should now and then be seen undressed.

Another fault imputed to him, is that of affirming, that "freedom from pain is the greatest pleasure." This opinion may more properly be called a mistake, and seems to have arisen from the violent nature of the disease to which he was subject; for tho' a

*It is pain =
escape
a feel*

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freedom from pain is a delightful sensation, yet it is only comparative, and is by no means to be called positive pleasure, which arises from motion, as the other does from rest. A fault of much deeper hue is chargeable to the Epicurean philosophy, which is that of despising the liberal arts and the study of polite literature, and placing happiness too much in repose.

He is more
contrasted
with the
epicureans
To make a candid estimate of the merits of this philosophy, compared with the maxims and systems of other moralists, it may be said, that tho' not so comprehensive in the detail of its precepts, nor so useful for common life, as the morality of Confucius, or the Bible, nor so sublimely pure as that of Jesus Christ, it is less incumbered with extraneous doctrines than either, and more practicable in general than that of the founder of Christianity. It is more rational, and better adapted to the state and temper of man (a being composed of various capabilities), than the narrow system of the Stoics, and more benevolent, more liberal, and more generous than the selfish system of Rochefoucault; the one is calculated to improve, and render our nature more amiable; the other, to debase and degrade it, by inducing the belief, that all our virtues are fictitious,

and that every man is the enemy of another.—

The best illustration of the merit of Epicurean principles, is the character of Atticus, one of the most accomplished men of antiquity. Dr Knox, in the first volume of his Essays, has defended him against the attacks of a French critic, and done justice to his worth. The odium which has been so long attached to the philosophy of Epicurus, so that in modern times an Epicure or Epicurean is only another name for a gross voluptuary, has arisen from a variety of sources, which it may be useful to point out, in order to shew that they are the result of envy, mistake, and prejudice. The first and greatest enemies of the Epicureans were the Stoics, principally because their doctrines were diametrically opposite to each other, and next, because they both set out in the world about the same time, and the Epicureans were the more popular of the two; these were no doubt powerful stimulants to enmity and calumny. The accusations brought against Epicurus by this irritated sect, extended not only to his doctrines, but to his connections and character, and they seem to have been so successfully propagated, that even a short time after his death, those who knew him only by name conceived him to have been

*Illustrated
in the
person of
Atticus.*

*The Stoics
opposed the
Epicureans.*

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*(Cicero's
opinion)*

a voluptuous debauchee, rather than a temperate philosopher. The grammarians and the comic poets* were his next defamers; the enmity of the former may be accounted for from the contempt he entertained of their studies, and the reproof which he is early in life said to have given to one of them (his preceptor), for his ignorance; but their reproaches extended only to his stile, and his neglect of what they termed the arts of composition and the circle of sciences. The charges of the other were more weighty, for the Stoics accused him of writing books which he never wrote, and uttering sentiments which he never uttered; there is hardly any species of intemperance, meanness, and debauchery, which they have not laid to his charge; they have indeed so overdone the matter, that they excite a suspicion of their veracity by the excess of their violence. Cicero was the first who ventured to do him justice, and tho' in some places where he differed from him he has mistaken his meaning, yet on the whole he has spoken of him with that candor and modera-

* The philosophers in general were a subject of ridicule to the comic writers, for Zeno was ridiculed by Philemon on account of his temperance and parsimony.

tion for which the new academy were always distinguished. A short time after the death of Cicero, the school of Epicurus began to be corrupted, and the vices which had been unjustly imputed to the leader became true of the sect. Torquatus and Atticus, the friends of Cicero, that many others, at that time, retained the doctrines and followed the example of their great master in full purity, but along with the general depravation of the empire, the Epicureans also became depraved, and misinterpreting the sense of the word pleasure, gave themselves up to every species of sensual and selfish enjoyment. Others, however, have imputed its destruction in part to the doctrines of the degenerate Epicureans, but the cause was too insignificant for the effect, and it is natural to suppose that they rather received than communicated the impulse of the times.— From that period, however, the sect fell into disrepute, and on account of their destructive principles were expelled from Rome and several other nations. Thus have I attempted to do justice to the memory of Epicurus, and to exonerate his philosophy from the charge of licentiousness. If I have succeeded with the liberal part of mankind, I have gained my

*The decl.
of the
Sect —*

purpose, for the illiberal are not to be convinced.

*Plutarch's
Diogenes
Laertius
&
Athenæus',
Character
of it*

Taking advantage of the general depravity of the sect, Plutarch revived the old calumnies against their founder, but soon after him Diogenes Laertius published his *Lives* of the philosophers, and redeemed the character of Epicurus from the odium under which it had suffered. A short time after him Athenæus, a grammarian, a weak man, and a bad writer, published a collection of scraps from all kinds of authors, and remembering the old grudge of his brethren against Epicurus, omitted not to heap on him every species of contumely, collected chiefly from the comic writers, to which he added a plentiful stock of his own vulgar ribaldry. It seems to have been one great object of Athenæus to calumniate the Grecian philosophers.

*Gassendi
revives
& adopts
of Philos.*

At the commencement of the 17th century, the philosophy and character of Epicurus found an able defender in the learned Gassendi.—The principles he adopted and improved, were embraced by a set of men who united heroism to delicacy of sentiment, and philosophy to the love of pleasure.—St Evremont brought these principles into England, and they are not yet

*St. Evremont
introduces
it in England*

extinct.* The philosophy of Epicurus may now be dismissed and committed to the candid examination of those who, out of many different systems and opinions, are desirous to select for themselves, according to the best of their judgment, a rule of life, plain, practicable, and efficient.

The morality of Zeno next requires our consideration, and having long contributed to preserve the peace of mankind, tho' now almost forgotten, it deserves to be treated with the respect due to the memory of a departed friend from whom we have derived both pleasure and advantage. It is worthy also of impartial examination, as having for a great length of time maintained its influence in the world, and been the familiar guide and companion not only of philosophers, but of kings, princes, and potentates, and of the better sort of mankind in different regions of the globe. The founder of the sect of Stoics was remarkable for the ugliness of his person, for the severity of his manners, and the integrity of his life; he enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his fellow-citizens, but tho' his followers were nu-

*The
Stoic
Philosophy*

*Zeno an
ugly man*

* The amiable James Harris, of Salisbury, has spoken favorably of the man, tho' he detested his doctrine, v. *Philological Enquiries*, p. 262.

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merous, they were not equal to those of Epicurus, whose manners and philosophy were in every respect more attractive. To the credit of his philosophy, it deserves to be told, that by a life of extreme temperance, and with a very feeble constitution, he preserved his existence in tolerable health till the extreme age of ninety-eight: and during that period had the satisfaction of seeing his doctrines embraced by men of high rank and station, and his school flourish in numbers as well as respectability, at the time of his death. The first principle which he held to be implanted in every animal at its birth was self-preservation, derived from the consciousness of existence, but this he denied to be connected with pleasure; it is, however, notwithstanding his aversion to the Epicureans, the very same principle which they call the love of pleasure, and the aversion to pain, for it is that which tends to our preservation and welfare. To live agreeably to nature he affirmed to be the end of man's creation, that is to say, according to reason, or virtue, or utility; for when things produce a useful effect it is to be supposed they answer the purpose for which they were intended. He denied pleasure to be a good, for all pleasures, he said, had something base

in their nature, and nothing base could be good. Here he differs from Epicurus only in his ideas of virtue; for Zeno entertained too refined notions of it, as if it was to be admired for itself alone, and Epicurus loved it only for the pleasure or utility it produced. To do good, he maintained, was to act according to virtue, to do evil according to vice. Among things indifferent he numbered riches, health, glory, &c. for he held it possible to be happy without any of these, because their being good or evil for us depended on their use. He was the first who defined duty to be the *raison*, or that which appertains to every one, and for which a good reason can be given why it should be performed. Every perturbation of mind he considered as irrational, unnatural, and arising from an excessive impulse. The true Stoic, he affirmed, was free from all these irregular affections, because he was in all things faultless; he was to be severe, because he should neither speak, nor hear others speak for mere gratification; sincere, because he ought never to appear what he is not; inaccessible to grief, because grief is an irrational contraction of the mind; approaching to divine, because he contains as it were a god within himself; pious and religious, and well versed in the divine laws; affectionate

*The true
Stoic*

to his children and to all his family, and benevolent to all mankind, considering himself a part of the universe, and therefore by nature intended to contribute his share to the good of the whole; he alone is free, for the wicked are slaves; he alone is a king, for the mind is an empire subject to no one; blameless, because he cannot sin, and innocent, because he cannot hurt others, nor others him; implacable to vice, because he ought neither to yield to affection nor entreaty, nor remit the punishment appointed by the law. He will wonder at none of those things which commonly excite the admiration of mankind; he can never be alone, for he is always conversing with nature; he can have no friendship but with the virtuous, for friendship consists only in a similarity of ideas; he has every thing in his power, because he only knows the proper use of every thing.

y doubted The Stoics doubted among themselves whether virtue, when once acquired, could ever
virtue be lost, and they disputed the point with a
lost degree of subtlety and refinement unworthy of true wisdom. With regard to the true and genuine Stoic, Zeno affirmed that the liberal
by arts were of the highest use to him, and that
commended when his country or his friends required it, or
be done when he could no longer be of any service to

the world, he might be allowed to depart; he maintained also that there ought to be a community of wives as the surest means of making men love the children of each other, and removing the temptations to adultery.

The Stoics also maintained that virtue was to be sought for on its own account, and defined it by the name of fitness, to which every thing honest and proper was to be referred.-- They despised bodily pain and pleasure, affirming that the one was no evil and the other no good. These are the principal moral doctrines of the Stoics, contained in Diogenes Laertius's Life of Zeno, and Cicero's 3d book of De Finibus, comprehend the opinions of their founder. It is foreign to my purpose to discuss or explain the metaphysical subtleties and imaginary distinctions either of him or his followers, or to set forth all the morality of the latter; whoever wishes for that sort of information which profiteth little to any man, may find it displayed at large in many books which I do not profess to have done more than looked into, finding the matter they contained so repulsive as to merit no portion of time which could be better employed. I leave it to those to study fine spun theories, who have a perverse taste for such unprofitable nonsense, and

*of a
community
of wives.*

*Virtue.
defined to
be fitness*

betake myself to that which may be reduced to practical utility.

*The effects
of Epictetus
Seneca &
Antoninus*

The excellent advice contained in the morals of Epictetus, the epistles of Seneca, and the meditations of Antoninus, entitles them to the perusal of every man who is desirous to advance in virtue while he advances in age. To these excellent treatises I refer my readers for the best practical precepts (allowing for some of the nonsense of the sect), which the whole circle of moral philosophy contains; and whoever can read these authors without feeling his virtue strengthened and his mind extended, is past the reach of instruction or the hopes of improvement. Tho' the professed object of the Stoic philosophy was to exalt our nature, it has, by aiming at too much, in some respects degraded it; for he who is insensible to those feelings which are common to the rest of mankind, can have no point of sympathy with them, and therefore becomes less than others, rather than greater. Stoical apathy, like Christian submission, is so contrary to our nature, that it rather excites our pity than our admiration, for he who cannot feel for others, must not expect that they should feel for him. In all but the single point of aiming at too much, the Stoical morality deserves our ap-

*Stoical
Philosophy
like
Christianity
attempts
too much.*

probation, and even here it may be useful as *its defects* an incentive to greater exertions than we should otherwise attempt; it is not, however, like the morality of Confucius, or the Old Testament, plain, sententious, and adapted to all capacities; it has too much of the pride and pomp of philosophy, and resembles too nearly the austere discipline of Pythagoras to be of use to the multitude; it depends too much on metaphysical reasoning to be of great practical utility; for tho' it is requisite that every man should form just notions of duty, and act from settled habits of reflection, it is not to be desired that he should stop to deliberate in every action of his life, as to the quantity of good it is likely to produce to the universe, or to balance with minute accuracy the difference between things of apparent similarity. There is, however, something great in the idea of exalting the mind above the evils of nature and the events of fortune, and placing her empire in a region beyond the reach of physical calamity, and the many great examples of moral purity which Stoicism has produced, are testimonies to the merit of her principles; yet the virtues of humble life, which attract little notice and excite little applause, seem to be placed be-

neath her regard; the quiet struggles of neglected poverty are triumphs too small for her ambition, but a great man wrestling with misfortune, she has pronounced to be an object which the gods themselves may look at with wonder. The grandeur of Cato attempting to support the falling liberties of Rome, and at length perishing in the ruins is an illustrious victory for the Stoical philosophy, because it affords a spectacle to the universe; but the silent efforts of modest merit contending with adversity, will make no figure in the pages of a Stoic philosopher, and hardly seem to deserve his notice; whatever is great or noble excites his attention, but private worth is too small an object for his praise.

40. in Zeno
the Stoic
philosophy
The philosophy of Zeno was calculated to make great men, but the virtues which it enjoins are almost above the reach of common ones, and are therefore not of general utility. She is too lofty to point out to mankind the detail of duties which are calculated for private life; she draws a great outline which is left for the practitioner himself to fill up; but there is hardly a station or event in life for which the morality of Confucius, the Bible, Socrates, Jesus Christ, and Plutarch, does not furnish some appropriate advice. To be

a Stoic requires a more than common capacity; first, to comprehend the great principles of the philosophy, and the causes from which they are deduced; and, next, to apply them to circumstances as they occasionally arise. To understand any of the moralists above mentioned requires little more than common sense, and a moderate education; for every duty of life is there described in characters so legible as not to be misunderstood. The philosophy of Zeno is intended only for philosophers, the morality of the others is adapted to every rank in society. By those however who are raised above the common events of life, and placed in conspicuous situations, the Stoical philosophy may be studied with considerable advantage to themselves and the public; it will furnish them with great and lofty motives to virtue; it will raise them above every thing mean and sordid; it will purify them from the grossness of avarice and self interest, and among such persons it has already produced illustrious examples of virtue, who, rising superior to vulgar temptations, have gained a place among the greatest benefactors of mankind. The philosophy of Zeno seemed to glory too much in adversity, and to court persecution as a means of being noticed. It is

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true, that temptation is the touch-stone of the mind, and that he who never contends for the prize, can never deserve the praise of victory, but there is no need to seek for danger and difficulty: if they come in our way while in pursuit of other objects, they will then afford sufficient exercise for our fortitude.

*The Stoic
philosophy
elevated
the human
character*

The grand idea of acting a conspicuous part in the drama of the universe, and meriting the approbation of its Great Ruler, is a persuasion which cannot fail to inspire exalted sentiments, and give a degree of sublime purity to the whole of a man's motives and actions superior to any petty suggestions of worldly ambition or sordid interest; and in an age of base degeneracy, when all the greater springs of conduct seem to have lost their force, and virtue is considered as no more than an empty name, it could not fail to be productive of considerable advantage to the world should a set of men arise, inspired with the genuine ardor of Stoical morality, to conduct the affairs of the world on a grand and elevated principle; such hopes, however, might justly be deemed visionary in times like the present.

*e. Epicurean
& Stoical
Systems
compared.*

On a candid comparison between the philosophy of Epicurus and that of Zeno, it may be

said that the one gave too much to the body, and the other to the mind; the one tended to make men indolent, the other urged them to exertions beyond the power of nature; the one placed virtue too much in pleasure, the other placed pleasure too much in virtue; for there is no doubt that the due mixture of each is requisite to our felicity; tho' both acknowledged the existence of bodily pain, the one foolishly considered it to be the greatest of evils, the other more foolishly denied it to be an evil at all; they both, however, acknowledged the supremacy of virtue, tho' they differed as to her nature.

The book of Offices by Cicero contains the most complete epitome of our duty to be found in any of the ancient moralists. It is true, he had the advantage of all the light which had been thrown upon the subject by those who preceded him in the same road, and indeed, both in his metaphysical and moral writings, he has done little more than translated the Greek philosophers; but in his Offices, by a selection from them all, he has formed a system of morality more complete than any one of them singly was able to compose; for by the principles of his sect, which was that of the New Academy, he was at liberty to choose

*Cicero's
de officiis
composed
of all the
maxims &
systems*

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the best parts of every other, without being servilely attached to any. He sets out with combating the doctrine of the Epicureans, in which he proceeds upon the same mistake which I have already noticed, viz. that Epicurus separated pleasure from virtue, and he contends that virtue is to be admired on her own account,—a disinterested motive of action certainly, but I much doubt whether supported by experience.—Being firmly attached to the Stoics, he does not altogether avoid some of their subtleties, but on the whole, he has drawn up the most intelligible, copious, and practicable system of morality to be found among the ancients. Throughout his discourse he considers the *honestum* and the *utile* as not to be separated, because nothing can be useful in the end to any individual which is not so to the whole of society, nor any thing generally useful to society which is not the same to the individual. A temporary and partial interest may be served by vice or dishonesty, but nothing can ultimately be for our advantage which tends to injure the community. The love of virtue he conceives to be derived from an innate love of harmony and propriety; but why suppose this innate, when we see the consequences of virtue to be the production of

*The Honestum
& the Utile
not to be
separated.*

happiness and comfort? Proportion and regularity we admire in external objects, not merely for themselves and independent of their effects, but because they produce convenience and give pleasure to the mind. It is the same in moral actions; we do not admire them on account of their approximation to some imaginary standard, but on account of their actual utility or fitness to produce happiness.

The best part of the Stoical philosophy was that which considered men to be created for the mutual support and defence of each other, which Pope has adopted in pronouncing self-love and social to be the same.* Cicero also in his morals proceeds on the same principles, and thence deduces the right of every man to claim the benevolent regard of others in distress and difficulty; yet he avoids the splendid excesses of Zeno, and takes care neither to despise pain nor riches, but considers the efforts of every man for his own subsistence calculated to produce the comforts, and even luxuries of life, by promoting arts and commerce. No man, says he, is to be blamed for wishing to encrease his own fortune, provided it is done

*Men
mutually
dependant
on each other*

* Ethic Epist. 5 l. 518.

ourselves, let others be what they may: a great and noble motive is held up by the Roman, calculated to improve the world, and exalt the nature of man, while the degenerate Briton recommends only the gratification of a pitiful, temporary interest, and the acquisition of a short-lived popularity: the maxim of the one is, "To be," that of the other, "To seem;" yet the advice of the former is not less calculated than that of the latter to form a man of the world; whoever wishes his son to be both an honest man and a gentleman will send him to study Cicero; whoever wishes him to be a gentleman only, may send him to Lord Chesterfield, and if the young man should possess nothing but the exterior of virtue, the father must not be surprised. The same remarks, on a similar comparison, may be extended to the French moralist, whom his lordship pointed out to his son for his morning and evening study.—The moderation, not the extinction, of the passions, is the advice of Cicero, and in this indeed consists almost the whole of virtue. The economy or management of our families he does not consider beneath his notice, and following the example of Socrates, he gives many useful maxims on this important duty, which he that neglects,

ought hardly to be trusted in the greater concerns of society. In short, Tully's offices are the best manual extant of our rights and duties.

*re the
mutation
of human
opinions*

The mutability of human affairs is in no respect more worthy of admiration than in those things which relate to the human intellect. Many books which were read with avidity an hundred years ago, are now thrown aside as useless lumber, or consigned to the pastry-cook and the trunk-maker; this neglect arises both from the subjects and the manner of treating them; and that man must have possessed a very powerful intellect who could overcome the awkward mode of communicating his thoughts which prevailed in England two hundred years ago.—Hobbes was not one of those whose mind was sufficiently vigorous to survive this powerful impediment; he is now, therefore, laid aside for more intelligible instructors, yet in his metaphysics he was the forerunner of Locke and Helvetius. He was the first Englishman who maintained that all our knowledge is derived from the senses, and that the mind of man, at his birth, is a mere blank—a *tabula rasa*—a sheet of white paper; whence it arises that the minds of all men are naturally equal, (vide *Leviathan*,

*Hobbes's
Leviathan*

cap. 13.) In this, and in different parts of his writings he has maintained, "That there is no such thing as natural dispositions;" consequently all men's actions depend on the circumstances in which they are placed.—"Whatsoever we imagine," said he, "is finite; when we say a thing is infinite, we signify only, that we are not able to conceive the ends and bounds of the thing named. No man can conceive any thing, but he must conceive it in some place; for nothing else can be incident to sense;" (vide *Leviathan* 3.) and he has told us before, that nothing can be conceived but thro' the medium of the senses. The weight and value of these two axioms are sufficient to immortalize the name of Hobbes, as tending to limit the speculations of finite intellect, and settle our knowledge on the sure basis of experience. "Reason," says he, "is not born with us, but attained by industry." "We love that which we wish for, and our will is nothing but the object of our appetite—the acquisition of these objects constitutes our felicity." "Virtue consists in choosing between the different objects of our desires, that which appears best when they are compared together." With the political doctrine of Hobbes I have nothing to do at present; from the small specimen I have

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given of his moral and metaphysical writings, it may be seen that we are chiefly indebted to him for those rational notions of the nature and duties of man, which have been since more fully explained by Locke and by Helvetius, and that therefore to these three men we are more indebted than to all the high-flown conceited notions of divines, of schoolmen, and of sophists, who have bewildered the world with their romantic speculations on the nature of spiritual essences, of incorporeal substances, and of self-existent beings, above human comprehension or intelligence.

*Locke's
Metaphysics*

The chief propositions relating to the mind which were asserted by Mr Locke have a reference to our conduct as intellectual beings, and they are as follow: first, That there are no innate ideas; this had been before obscurely perceived by Aristotle, Epicurus, and Hobbes; —it was more fully illustrated by Locke, and finally confirmed by Helvetius: from hence it results that there are no innate practical principles, and consequently no such thing as general notions of right and wrong independent of utility, confirmed by experience. The manner in which he accounts for a contrary belief demands the serious attention of every man who is accustomed to take his opinions

upon other people's authority. Having denied all principles, both speculative and practical, to be innate, he proceeds to shew how they are acquired. His next great principle, which has been of such service to the world, is derived from Epicurus, viz. that pleasure and pain are the measure of good and evil to mankind. Mr Locke was probably the first man who maintained that morality is capable of demonstration, but he cannot mean in the same manner as mathematics, because the one exists in the nature of things, and the other is only to be proved by experience; it is demonstrable, without any previous experience, that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, and it is a fact independent of our knowledge of it, but to do to others what we desire them to do to us, is only demonstrated to be a good maxim from the result of experience; to prove the consequence of a thing to be good, is different from proving a thing's actual existence. The advantage to be derived from Mr Locke's philosophy in a practical light is almost incalculable, yet there are some things which detract from its general utility; his language is tedious and verbose; he deals too much in metaphysical subtlety, and his religious principles, in some measure,

*Reason &
Pain the
Standard
of Good
& Evil*

restrain the freedom of his enquiries, and lead him into inconsistency; yet, on the whole, so valuable are his philosophical researches in promoting the operation of our intellectual powers, as applied to the exercise of morality, that I think no greater service could be done to the rising generation than to give a correct and intelligible abridgement of his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, so that all men might read it, and all who read might understand.

*Shaftesbury's
characteristics*

The philosophy of Shaftesbury is not the philosophy of reason but of imagination; for his leading doctrines are incapable of being proved, tho' they are illustrated with all the charms of fancy. Virtue with him is not a real practical system of conduct, but a romantic creature of the imagination, which exists prior to and unconnected with any actual advantage which it conveys to society. These, and other flights of metaphysics which he has borrowed from Plato and the Stoics, and handed down to Bolingbroke, to Pope, Hutcheson, and others of the Scotch philosophers, may be considered as pleasing reveries calculated to divert the minds of speculative philosophers, but incapable of producing any good to the world. The foolish system of optimism, and

the incomprehensible doctrine of the moral sense or virtuous instinct, may amuse, but they can never improve mankind; for they by no means rationally account for the moral phenomena of the world, nor give a satisfactory explanation of the motives of human actions. To say that every thing is for the best in a system where much is acknowledged to be bad, may satisfy implicit faith, but can never convince enquiring reason; and to tell us that men are instinctively impelled to right and wrong, is to take from the dignity of rational beings and degrade us to the level of brutes. Such doctrines may yet find a few disciples, but they will neither satisfy the faith of Christians, who account for the existence of evil by a more pious machinery, nor silence the doubts of infidels who believe in nothing which cannot be proved. The only practical system of belief is that which trusts every thing to reason, and hesitates where that can go no farther: it is founded in utility, and confirmed by experience.

Mr Hume improved, explained, and extended the philosophy of Locke, tho' in many respects he differs from him; his metaphysics and his morality are both derived from facts, and if in the former he is mistaken in his de-

*Hume's
Metaphysics
& Morals*

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ductions by giving too much weight to the system of benevolence, it is an amiable error, and certainly not of much importance. The doctrine of utility found in him an able defender, for no man has more successfully exposed the folly of the Stoics in supposing virtue to be amiable on her own account independent of her consequences than Mr Hume; by a repeated appeal to facts he has placed the matter beyond a doubt. He has not quite so successfully espoused the doctrine of disinterested benevolence in opposition to what is called the selfish system; for tho' in effect there is not much difference between a refined self-love and a generous philanthropy, yet it will not be difficult to prove that man being a creature who acts solely from his own sensations and feelings is incapable of tasting any pleasure from the connection with his species independent of his own gratification. All our actions being allowed to proceed from a regard to ourselves must be called selfish, but there is a refined and a gross self-love, the former of which derives pleasure from the pleasures of others, and the latter solely from ourselves; this distinction will, I trust, be found sufficient to explain what has been hitherto frequently confounded; for men acting entirely from ha-

bit, the motives of their actions are frequently concealed even from themselves, and they who have repeatedly experienced the pleasures of benevolence are apt to conceive benevolence to be exerted independent of self-satisfaction, for in time they become so closely connected, that the impulse of the one is generally mistaken for that of the other. Self-love is the first emotion of the human heart, and very properly so; a child in its first years can have no idea but of its own preservation, but as it becomes more connected with the world, if endowed with sufficient sensibility and properly educated, it acquires the feelings of benevolence, or a regard for others; and here the distinction takes place between gross and refined self-love; it is from not attending to this distinction that Dr Parr has classed Rousseau and Helvetius, Mandeville and Rochefoucault, and consequently Chesterfield, together; whereas the two former only assert that men are originally selfish, but admit the fullest exercise of benevolence; the latter affirm that man is continually actuated by the grossest selfishness, and that benevolence is only a cloak more effectually to disguise its deformity. Hume and others maintain the existence of the benevolent affections, simply

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and unconnected with any selfish feeling ; yet it is difficult to conceive why a man should love his species, or do a kindness to individuals, without being actuated by a sense of the pleasure he feels in so doing ; the supposition is inconsistent with a knowledge of our nature strictly analysed ; and the fact is, that our admiration of the social virtues, arises not merely from their tendency to promote the public good, independent of their own, but from a remote reference to ourselves ; whatever in the first instance gives us pleasure by gratifying the mind or senses, in a more extensive view, pleases us by the idea that it does the same to others, and the more extensive its utility the greater our pleasure, till in time we comprehend the universe in the circle of our benevolence.

*Locke's
Theory of
the Mind*

The treatise of Helvetius on the mind, tho' laboring under the defects which arise from a love of system, is to a certain extent capable of producing great good ; because it satisfactorily and clearly accounts for many operations of the human mind, which were before not fully comprehended ; its greatest error is that of attributing every thing to education, and leaving nothing to nature, or to that early disposition of mind which results from the formation of

the bodily system. That the senses are the only inlets to knowledge, and that the love of pleasure, and aversion to pain, or in other words, self-interest, is the great motive of all our actions, he has successfully, and indisputably proved; but he goes too far in maintaining that the capacities and tempers of all men are naturally equal.

Professor Grimaldi in his *Riflessioni sopra l'Inegauglianza tra gliuomini*, cap. 7. is a formidable antagonist; De la Methetierie has displayed all his physiological knowledge to overthrow the positions of Helvetius, and they two have convinced every impartial person that the original difference of temperament will make a considerable difference in the minds of men. The matter seems to stand thus.--Allowing to Helvetius that the mind depends on the physical organization of the body, we must allow to his opponents, that even where that organization is complete, it is different in different men, and that the nerves of all men are not equally irritable, nor the brain equally capable of receiving and retaining ideas; for as in all other animals their bodily formation has a considerable influence on their qualities, so it cannot be denied that the formation of the human mind must depend

*Grimaldi
& de la
Methetierie
oppose it*

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greatly on the temperament of the body; but here the similarity ceases, for external impressions also contribute their share in a very great proportion; hence it will follow, that tho' education cannot do all, it must still affect the formation of the mind in a degree which can hardly be expressed. Men bring no ideas into the world with them, but they bring a capacity for receiving ideas, which in almost all men is different.

Stewart's
Metaphysics

Dugald Stewart is a practical metaphysician, he has redeemed that dreary science from the opprobrium under which it labored, and caused refined speculation to go hand in hand with practical philosophy. He has shewn the true ends and uses of all enquiries into the nature of the human mind, and by applying the result of these enquiries to politics and morality, has rendered a service to metaphysicians, to moralists, and to the world, which can never be obliterated; and I will not hesitate to pronounce, that the second chapter of his introduction to the Elements of Philosophy, is the most valuable piece of philosophical admonition now extant. Tho' I admire his candor and liberality, I by no means on all occasions agree with him.

Paley's
Moral &

Political
Philosophy

The moral philosophy of Dr Paley is of a

very liberal complexion for a Christian divine, yet it is not free from the errors of his profession, nor the mistakes of former moralists; his definition of virtue is not sufficiently general, it belongs only to one set of men, and excludes all those who act right from any motive short of those which are termed religious. "Virtue," he says, "is the doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of everlasting happiness." According to this definition, no man can be virtuous who disbelieves in a future state of existence. A most false and illiberal position, and contradicted by every day's experience. Dr Paley seems to forget that all the world are not Christians; yet in his chapter on utility, he has placed virtue on its proper basis, by excluding all arbitrary notions which have no existence but in the conceit of fanciful speculation, and by declaring that no action can be virtuous which is not consistent with the general good. The advantages derived to mankind, by the declaration of such a principle, from such authority, and by its being now publicly taught in our schools and universities, is hardly to be conceived; it has overthrown the scholastic lumber of ages, and brought mankind, in their moral speculations and practice, to consult the

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dictates of reason, and the lessons of experience.

*Godwin's
Philosophy
"Political
Justice."*

To appreciate fairly the merits of Mr Godwin's philosophy, so as to keep the balance even between those who have unjustly praised, and those who have not less unjustly condemned it, is no easy task. It is very difficult to be impartial, yet it is required of all those who sit in judgment on the property, the talents, or the merits of others; for it is by truth only that the world can be enlightened. The great principle on which he founds the whole of his system, tho' a broad one, is too narrow for the superstructure which he has built upon it. Justice cannot comprehend the whole of our duty, because the intercourse of society brings us in contact with each other at various points; to some we owe one thing, and to some another, we owe justice to all; and tho' private duties, where they interfere with public ones, must give way, it does not follow that we are to neglect our nearest relatives for any uncertain public good. The duties of private life are clear, and easily ascertained; those we owe to the public are not so readily defined. The strictness of Mr Godwin's principles resembles that of the Stoics; they laid down a system which they affirmed to be the only true one,



and from which there was to be no departure by those who wished to be either wise or happy ; he does the same, which, considering the fallibility of human judgment, is much too arbitrary and positive. Nothing faultless is to be expected from any one man, but there are few men whose writings do not contain some good. To select the best from each, and compile for the use of the vulgar, belongs to men of superior talents. Mr Godwin errs also materially in another view, he thinks too highly of man, he supposes him to be capable of arriving at a much higher degree of excellence than the analogy of nature, or the experience of the world will justify ; but tho' he errs in the fact, the opinion can do no harm, and has a tendency to do good. Mankind will never be improved but by aiming at something higher than they have power to attain, and whoever can induce them to do this, is doing them a service. No man, therefore, has ever objected to Mr Godwin that his system is not useful ; the most that can be said is, that it is not practicable ; but let all men follow his advice, and they will come much nearer to his model, than by vainly disputing with each other, and resting in their present state of indolence. All his arguments tend to the advancement of

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reason and truth, and to convince men that the world can never be rendered happy, but by these instruments; whether these will ever be sufficiently prevalent, is much to be doubted. The morality of Mr Godwin is of a strong, corroborative kind, it is like a cold bath to the body, or tonics to the stomach; it is no palliative system which tends to conceal the defects of human nature, or recommends only gentle remedies for their cure; it searches to the bottom of our impurities, and purges them off by vigorous potions; it is calculated to strengthen, improve, and invigorate our nature, and he that can read it without feeling himself more strongly impelled to virtue, and more refined in his motives, must have an impenetrable head or a depraved heart, must be either bewildered by enthusiasm, stupified by prejudice, or immersed in vice; he must be a blockhead, a profligate, or a bigot. Tho' I speak of the best parts of Mr Godwin's book on Political Justice, I must allow that there are others highly exceptionable, because they contain principles impracticable, ridiculous, and unjust. His notions of justice are pushed to such an extreme, as to weaken or destroy the best propensities of our nature, and under the idea of a vague general good, to loosen

the amiable ties of affection and gratitude, and in the end destroy the purpose he intended to promote. His speculations on the future condition of mankind are so ridiculous, as hardly to merit a serious examination. That part which relates to population has been examined, and ably confuted by Mr Malthus, who by opposing facts to opinions, has established principles in political economy which bid defiance to all the attacks of sophistry and bigotry. The best parts of Mr Godwin's theory, I am sorry to say, have had their influence considerably lessened by the nonsense with which they are mingled, and the number of his readers are now much diminished.

In the early ages of the world men always act more from their imagination than their reason, hence all systems of morality rested on some religious belief; it is time now that it should stand by itself.—It is of full and mature age and capable of standing without such support, for whether there is a Deity or not, such as men have conceived him, it will always be for the general interest, and therefore the duty of individuals, that men should act honestly and kindly towards each other, and prudently towards themselves; and the necessity for this is so strongly fixed in the na-

*That mora
does not sta
in need of a
religion, &c.*

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ture of things, and the means of it in the minds of some men, that it is requisite it should be generally taught, in order that those who by natural disposition are not inclined to honesty and generosity, should be trained up to the practice of those virtues as the effect of habit and instruction. Morality, simply considered as the bond of society, has no more to do with a future life than it has with a past one. Men seldom act in the common concerns of the world from the hope of a distant and uncertain reward, they feel impelled by something more immediate and forcible.

~Lambert's
Catechisme
Universel,"
the best
manual
of morality

A convenient Manual of the moral duties, selected from the Bible and other writings, is in the present state of society a great *desideratum*. Many such have been attempted, but they have all fallen short of that concise simplicity which is requisite for common understandings, they are all too metaphysical and not sufficiently perceptive. The best of any yet published is the *Catechisme Universel*, by St Lambert.

The amiable and venerable author of the above-mentioned system has endeavored to select whatever is excellent from the different speculations of former philosophers, and if he does not embrace implicitly the doctrines of

any, he is the more to be admired for keeping himself free from their follies and mistakes; he is certainly most inclined to the opinions of Epicurus, as being the most practicable, and consequently best calculated for general utility. He considers that the great end and use of morality is to teach men to enjoy life innocently, and he finds that this purpose is best promoted by the moderate and alternate pleasures of reason and the senses; and that whoever gives too much of his time or attention to one particular pursuit, is more likely to injure than to promote enjoyment. By such a philosophic regulation of his life the author preserved his existence till the extreme period of ninety-three, with health and vivacity.

The system of De la Metherie differs little from that of Helvetius, except that he considers the talents and tempers of men to depend more on their physical organization; yet he by no means denies the strong effect of education and external circumstances. Like Helvetius, he considers man originally but a degree removed from the ouran-outang, and in his present state to be wholly the creature of art, so that his faculties and powers owe their development entirely to society, and by one single faculty alone he is placed above the brutes;

*De la
Metherie's
System
compared
with that of
Helvetius*

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yet that faculty has so much need of cultivation, that without it, man in a natural state is hardly a rational creature. His analysis of man is most minute and complete, he follows him thro' every gradation, from the inarticulate savage to the highest state of intellectual improvement. Helvetius analyses the species, De la Metherie the individual; it is in such authors as these, who are exalted above vulgar errors, that the true nature of man is to be found. The two last chapters of De la Metherie I recommend to the particular and constant attention of those who seek after truth divested of habit and prejudice.

*Burdons
9 opinion
1 on suicide*

In a treatise on morality it may naturally be expected that I should say something upon Suicide. In the first place then I consider it no crime, because every man has a right to that which is his own, and nothing can be more his own than his life. No man has a right to the life of another, tho' men collectively, that is the public, have a right to take away the lives of those who take away the lives of others, which is the greatest of all crimes. When we have both the right and the power to take away our life, it is a mere matter of prudence whether we should exert it or not. It seldom happens, however, that any man is reduced to

such a state as to be without hope, and therefore few men can be justified in having recourse to this last resort of misery. To be unable to bear trouble and distress is a proof of a gloomy and impatient disposition, and therefore inconsistent with the dictates of wisdom and philosophy—but surely society, if they had the power, can never have a right to punish any man because he chooses to fly from misfortune, and it is mean and pitiful to shew indignity to a dead body, particularly since it is found to be useless as an example. To confiscate the goods of the deceased is unjust, because the punishment falls on the innocent.—The best remedies against suicide are good government and philosophy.

The great support of morality is the opinion of the virtuous, and were they unanimous in discountenancing vice and iniquity, by whomsoever committed, the frequency of such deviations would be considerably lessened, and the world considerably improved; but when every species of meanness and villainy which does not grossly offend against the law, is countenanced not only by the wicked, who are naturally kind to each other, but by men who profess to have a hatred of vice, and to wish well to the happiness of society, it is not to be

*The opinion
of the virtuous
the great
support of
morality*

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wondered that virtue diminishes, and crimes multiply.

*The difference
between
positive &
negative
virtue*

The difference between an active moral principle and the mere restraints of decency and convenience is much greater than men generally imagine; the one can only be found in a pure state of society, the other may be submitted to in an age of the utmost profligacy. Moral principles can never operate to any great extent amid the blandishments of luxury, the excess of riches, and the speculations of commerce. The tendency of vice to produce disease and unhappiness is the sole reason why it should be banished from society, and if men were only prevailed on to consider the consequences of their actions, they might possibly stop before they endangered their health and happiness by a continued course of debauchery. Health and content are the greatest blessings of life; without the former riches are nothing, and as to the latter, tho' riches cannot give it, they may take it away; for the rich have so many artificial wants that they seldom find them all indulged.

*The estimate
of human
lives, the
great criterion
of civilization*

The great criterion of civilization is the value at which the lives of human beings are estimated; but as there seems to be a radical defect in the system of the world, consisting in

the disproportion which exists between the increase of population and the means of subsistence, it is to be apprehended that mankind will never be completely civilized; that is to say, completely under the dominion of reason and morality. A principle of destruction is implanted in almost all the different parts of nature; some animals are formed expressly to contend with and to feed upon each other, and with man the state of nature is a state of war, which civilization does not entirely change, tho' it somewhat lessens its ferocity and its frequency; and all this for the purpose of counteracting their too great tendency to propagate. Till we make all men think alike upon all subjects, wars and tumults will never cease, and that period seems to be very distant; individuals and nations, therefore, must in the mean time do the best they can for themselves, without grossly violating the principles of justice, but to expect that all men will ever act honestly, and prefer a remote to a present interest, is as ridiculous as it would be according to Hudibras to expect,

All taylor's yards of one

Unanimous opinion.

“The false weight and the false balance are an abomination to the Lord,” and so they are to

P P

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those who are too honest to use them, but there will always be some that will, in defiance of law, scripture, and philosophy.

*The rights
of man,
antecedent
to civilization,
doubtful*

Tho' much has been said and written about the rights of man, I much question whether they have any rights antecedent to a state of society; and if so, their duties can only arise out of the same state of civilization. Reason is the criterion of right, and law is its best preserver. Strength of force may sometimes be substituted for reason, and become sanctioned by time and possession, but the foundations of justice can never be altered, and tho' it is to be lamented, that right may sometimes be overpowered by might, yet power can never confound the distinction between right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust. A man of consistent integrity continually acts from a regard to what he owes to the general interest; such a man seldom suffers his passions to get the better of his feelings or his judgment, but if our continual study is to please the world, we can have no leisure to study ourselves, and unless we have formed accurate notions of duty or morality, and continually refer our conduct to these rules, we can do right or wrong only by chance, and can never deserve the praise of virtue even from the multitude.

An opinion, altogether subversive of morality and destructive to the happiness of society, has been advanced by Mr Grimm and by others, mere men of the world, who judge of all things by the rules of temporary convenience, viz. That treatises and precepts of morality are useless, as every man's own interest will teach him to see that which is for his good, and that nothing else will have any influence on his conduct. If this be true, it strikes at the foundation of all arts and sciences, for it asserts that principles are nothing, and that every man must be his own instructor and guide.

*The error
opinion
de Grimm
p. 221*

Whoever acts upon the short-sighted consideration of his immediate interest, has not advanced two degrees beyond a savage, who is governed by the mere impulse of the moment. The distinguishing character of civilized man is to act upon general principles, and a regard to consequences, both as they affect himself, and others. How is he to arrive at the knowledge of these principles but by early instruction, or subsequent reflection? thence the use of principles or maxims derived from experience of particular facts, which being impressed on the youthful mind, become the means of forming virtuous and moral

*General
principles
the distinguishing
character
of civilized
man*

habits. It is only by considering the general consequences of particular actions that they can be pronounced good or evil, for that which may seem good to an individual for a short time, may in the event, be evil both to himself and others; hence, then it must be laid down as a general rule, that all such actions should be avoided.

*The excellency
of general
principles
shown*

The more men reflect on the consequence of their actions, the more moral they will become; and it is almost impossible that any man can be considered as a moral and rational being who does not act from the result of early good habits, or much meditation. No individual can be able to tell, by the mere exertion of his natural understanding, the whole effects of his conduct either on himself or others, but when from an attentive observation of mankind, the general tendency of actions is generalized into principles, and taught by rules and maxims. He who neglects to avail himself of the experience and wisdom of others, or to instruct his children by these general rules, is guilty of a gross breach of his duty to society, and deserves to suffer for his criminality. Books of morality are also useful, inasmuch as they put the subject in various lights, and afford various arguments for the perform-

ance of our duty, and against a life conducted on the mere suggestions of temporary interest.

The best foundation of morality is an enlarged and philosophical view of mankind, by which it will be seen that nature has not provided for the full enjoyment either of our rational or sensual faculties, and that it is, therefore, the duty and interest of man to submit to many privations, and to accommodate himself to much evil and inconvenience; that it becomes him to do all the good in his power, since it is only by such benevolent exertions that the evils of nature and society can be remedied. Man is not a creature of unlimited power, nor can he even exert all his powers in this world of inequality; he must restrain many propensities, and deny himself many pleasures, for the sake of future consequences; he must purchase the happiness of one day at the expence of that of another; he must deprive himself of many things for his own sake, and for the sake of others; he must calculate with almost mathematical accuracy the different actions of his life, if he wishes to spend it with tolerable satisfaction and comfort. In short, he must exercise his reason rather than his faith, if he wishes to understand the nature of

*a liberal
enlarged
philosophy
the best
foundn.
Moral*

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things around him, and the one requires no more time and trouble than the other.

*The advantages
of comparing
the various
systems of
morality*

The advantage to be derived from the study of all the different rules and systems of morality does not consist merely in theoretical wisdom, but in practical melioration; for whoever reads either history, morality, or philosophy, without becoming a better man than he was capable of being without such knowledge, has read to no purpose, and might as well have been idle, or otherwise employed. Man is naturally a savage; it is only by a comparison of ideas that he becomes civilized; and without this he has studied a vain philosophy, but it is almost impossible to become familiarized to any particular turn of thinking without its having some influence on the conduct, tho' it sometimes happens that men who read much, think little, and consequently their reading has little effect on their actions. Such a hopeless state of mind no advice can possibly improve; but those who are not beyond the power of receiving good impressions, it may be useful to advise to keep their minds open to the influence of what they read, and not to suffer themselves to be drawn from the wisdom of the wise by the folly of the world; to read with a desire to be improved, and not as a mere mechanical em-

ployment. To men who apply to books with such intentions, the great advantage to be derived from the study of moral philosophy, consists in acquiring general principles in opposition to the loose morality of the world, and in remarking that however philosophers may differ as to the ends and motives of human conduct, they all agree in some general rules which are essential to happiness. They all agree, that the study of knowledge, wisdom, or morality, is of all others the most excellent; that the maxims by which a virtuous man ought to form his conduct are in constant contradiction to the maxims of the world, and that a philosopher ought to despise the opinion of the vulgar; that happiness consists in mediocrity, that virtue is to be acquired only by meditation and study, that justice is the first of virtues, that purity of heart, that truth, and honesty are to be preferred to all earthly goods, and that benevolence is the great bond of society. These and many other such maxims are only to be established in a man's mind by a constant perusal of the best writers on morality.

Morality, unconnected with religion, rests solely on the foundation of reason, and is the sole preserver of the peace of the world; reli-

*morality,
offspring
reason*

Moralunters o systems

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gion is the reverse, for every religion believing itself the true one, is of course intolerant towards all others, and seeks to subject all to its own faith, hence come "wars and fightings."

Reasonably
Reason

Reason is one and the same in all climates and countries, and therefore it can never be at variance with itself, nor persecute others who are the most remote from its doctrines; it may seek to convert, but never by the means of force or violence; its only weapons are persuasion and argument; its creed is simple and intelligible, for it believes nothing which it cannot understand, nor enforces more upon others; it pretends not to comprehend either the formation or government of the world, and limits its researches to the moral duties between man and man; it teaches us to do to others what we wish them to do to us, and seeks its own good without neglecting that of others; it tells us in one word that general utility is the first rule of all our actions, and that while we do harm to ourselves or others, we do harm to the community. Much more may be taught, but much more it is not easy to comprehend.

ur Reason,
le only
'standard
' Right
Living:

The reason of man is the only standard of right and wrong; it is therefore to him the only criterion of morality, and the only means by which he can form an idea of a divinity.

The sensible objects of nature exist externally, or independent of man; virtue exists in his actions; but a Deity exists only in the idea we form of him; we imagine, we believe, but we never can prove his existence. We all know and feel that there is much good and much evil in the world; but when we attempt to find out how or whence they come, we only bewilder our reason, without adding to our happiness. The good, men call God, and the evil, they call the Devil; thus vainly imagining that they have discovered their origin, when they have only personified their existence. Ignorance is the mother of devotion, and the world has always worshipped the creatures of its own imagination; for a Deity exists only in the mind of man. The external world admits of sensible proof, but the world of spirits admits of no proof at all, and the morality of our actions does not in any degree depend on our spiritual belief, tho' men may imagine themselves actuated by such motives; it is our temporal and sensual interests which alone influence our conduct, and on the regulation of our interests and passions depends the whole of our morality. Reason, therefore, is the only sure guide, sanction, and support of nations and of individuals, and when the latter

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err or do amiss, they must be judged by the general sense of mankind, which is the only infallible tribunal for all human guilt. Good, or the means of happiness, is the constant object of man's admiration and pursuit, this the heathens worshipped under various forms, the Deist and the Christian under one. The passions are said to be various, tho' in fact there are but two, love and fear, the rest are only their different modifications. Principles are general rules deduced from experience.

*Religion
&
Morality
compared.*

Religion and morality have been so long united that it is almost impossible to dissolve the union; yet considering how essentially they differ, one almost wonders how they ever came together. Religion exists solely in the mind of man, morality in his actions; the one varies according to the temper of those from whom it has originated, the other is in all countries nearly the same. Religion rests solely on imagination, morality on reason and facts. The scripture says, God made man after his own image; had it said the contrary it would have expressed the truth; for the character of the Deity differs according to the different characters of those by whom he is worshipped; with the Jews he is a God of cruelty and terror; with the Hindoos of tole-

ration and great mercy. Morality is in some degree affected by local customs and popular propensities, but its fundamental principles are in all countries the same. Religions are as various as the beings from whom they have originated, but morality is the same throughout the world; it enjoins no cruel sacrifices, it ordains no bloody rites, it speaks in all nations the language of reason, justice, and utility. All systems of religion are but attempts to account for the origin and operations of nature, and are generally veiled in allegory.

Condition of Mortality
Examined

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THE CONDITION OF MORTALITY
EXAMINED.

Man-kind **M**AN, never satisfied with the present, is
more disposed always looking back to what he has been,
to anticipate or forward to what he is to be; the propensity
the Future, to the former, however, is not so general as
than to reflect that to the latter. Few have adopted the
on the past, system of Pythagoras, compared to those who
or to be satisfied believe in a future existence, yet the one is not
with the present more difficult to prove than the other. Man-
kind are apt to fall into two extremes with
regard to the future; some think too little
about it and some too much; true wisdom
lies between the two. The evil that is never
thought of is borne with difficulty, that which
is foreseen becomes lighter. We cannot fly
from Fate, it is wise therefore to be forewarned
of its arrival. A modern author of considera-
our present ble acuteness, maintains that it is impossible to
ills, have account for the evils of the present life with-
been accounted out supposing it to be a state of punishment
a punishment for
former offences

(* note p 135)

for sins committed in a former state, and of probation towards a future; whether he was serious] it is difficult now to determine; if he was, it will be easy to prove his argument ridiculous; and if he was not, we must admire the keenness of his irony. The strongest argument against a prior state of existence, is *our unconsciousness* that we are not conscious of it, and to be punished for what we have no knowledge, or remembrance of at the time we are punished, *of such prior existence disproves idea* can have no tendency towards our amendment, which is, or ought to be the great object of punishment. On the other hand, those who believe in a future state, to be consistent, ought *on a future State, from upon the Eternity; the soul* to believe in a past; for if the soul of man is capable of existing to all eternity, it is difficult to conceive how it could have had a beginning; for that which is eternal ought no more to be limited at one end than at the other. But tho' a future state of existence is barely probable, a past one is impossible; the idea disproves itself; for if we have existed, it has been to no purpose, as it leaves no remembrance. The arguments for a future state having some probability on their side, have obtained a very general reception, and being attended also with some apparent advantage to mankind, will not easily be discredited among the mul-

Condition of mortality

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titude, but those who judge and act from a regard to the real state of things, and not from false appearances, will probably listen to the contrary arguments by which they may be disproved. The direct proof, of a future state can only be derived from the word of God, or a divine revelation; but we have no revelation which does not contradict both the evidence of the senses and of experience; independent of revelation, therefore, the belief of a future state must rest solely on probability. The analogy of nature, it is said, points out to us this probability from the several changes we have already experienced; but this analogy is defective in not referring to a state of past existence, because, could such a state be proved, the analogy would be rendered much stronger than by merely stating the changes which have happened in the present, for they contain no analogy at all with reference to a future state, and can only be applied to the probability of still greater in the present. The destruction of the vital functions puts an end to all hopes arising from analogy, unless it could be proved that this life is a resurrection from a former state of existence; but so far from having a consciousness of any prior life, we are even ignorant of what happened to us in the early

direct
proof, can
only be
derived
from the
Creator.

analogy
defective

on
i.
see
by
for

part of our present existence; it seems then that a principle or essence, which was at first so weak and indistinct, can hardly be intended for immortality; it is not fair, therefore, to conclude that we shall be immortal merely because we wish to be so. The argument taken from the analogy of the scriptures to the constitution of nature, is equally defective, because it is requisite that in all analogical reasoning the things which we reason about should exactly resemble each other; thus, to argue that the sun will rise to-morrow because it has risen for a thousand years, is a fair analogy, because the cases are exactly similar; but to argue that there must be difficulties in the scriptures because there are difficulties in the order of nature, allowing them to be from the same author, is a false analogy, because the things do not resemble each other, and besides it takes for granted that the scriptures are the word of God, which is by no means proved. To argue from what we see here, to what we expect hereafter, is no more warranted than to suppose that because a man has lived sixty years he will live a hundred.

The argument for a future life derived from the evils and injustice of the present, rests solely on our ideas of the Divinity, which are

*an exact
resemblance
in things
necessary
in reasoning
analogical*

*The injustice
prevailing
on Earth an
imperfect
argument
for a future
existence*

Condition of Mortality

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by no means capable of proof, and therefore has not much tendency to strengthen that which was originally weak. To argue from what is defective to something complete, is a very liberal mode of argument, but hardly warranted by the laws of sound reasoning.— We might as well suppose that because a watch-maker has formed a very bad watch, he can therefore make a very good one. To those who infer a future state of rewards and punishments, from the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of good men, it is easy to reply with this strong fact—The wicked are not always so happy in this world, nor the good so unhappy as some men imagine, and vice is nine times out of ten its own punishment. The belief of a future state tends considerably to weaken the efficacy of morality, for they who have been early accustomed to act from no other motive than a fear of punishment, should that ever be removed or forgotten, will never believe that to restrain their appetites and passions, is most conformable to their duty and their interest.

*The effects
of believing
in a
future
state*

*The love of
life gives
origin to
the hope
of its continu-
ance in a future state.*

Our notions of a future state derive their origin and strength from that love of life which grows up with man and makes him unwilling to leave it, and so he soothes himself with the

idea of another, as children are enticed to part with their playthings by telling them they shall have others in their stead; it is strengthened also by that vanity and presumption which make us believe that we hold a higher rank in the universe than we actually do. Our powers and faculties are great no doubt, compared with those of beasts, yet nothing compared to the universe around us, of which we neither can comprehend the cause, the nature, nor the end. And after all, what are the boasted privileges and superiority of man; he is born with faculties capable of almost unlimited improvement, but for all this he is only one degree removed from a monkey, he comes into the world in a mode both indelicate and distressing, a mode which requires some such apology as that contained in the book of *Genesis* or *Generation*, c. 3. v. 16.--he continues in a helpless state much longer than any other animal; through disease of body or mind he often drags on a miserable existence and wishes he had never been born. Some men, however, arrive at maturity both of body and mind, and others attain to the highest excellence of their nature by the improvement of their rational powers; but the greater part perish in a state of comparative non-

*The great
superiority
of man
questioned*

Condition of Mortality

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entity, before they have acquired the faculties or bodily strength which are common to their race, and many others without having obtained a proper improvement of their rational faculty. Others die, apparently of little consequence to the rest of the creation, and are carried off in the prime and vigor of their existence, by war, by pestilence, and famine; and even those whose lives seem to be of the greatest importance to their friends and fellow creatures are suddenly removed from the sphere of their usefulness, and reduced to a lifeless lump of mortality; of so little value is human life in the system of the universe. One should think this might teach us humility, might teach us to be content with our present state, to improve our present existence, and cease to soar after a distant and uncertain being, which must in every respect be independent of any thing we do here, as the present is of any thing that may be past. We know not what we have been, nor what we shall be, we only know what we are.

*his hope
gives strength
from the
miseries we
suffer on
earth*

The belief of a future state derives its greatest strength from the miseries of mankind; for it is natural that those who are wretched here, should console themselves with the hopes of happiness hereafter, and far be it from

me to rob any man of such consolation, without attempting to give him something in return. While such hope has the effect of soothing the afflicted, it cannot wholly be condemned ; yet it is much to be desired that men should derive their comfort from the exertion of their reason, rather than from the indulgence of their fancy, and either submit themselves patiently to the evils of their present lot, or endeavor to improve their condition by enlightening themselves and their fellow creatures. All enquiries into a future state have hitherto only produced tumult and confusion, for they who once possess themselves of a belief on such a subject, are jealous of having it disputed, and unwilling to suffer others to differ from them; they have, therefore, constantly endeavored to enforce it by penalties and persecution, and kept the world in arms to support their opinion. Religion is a subject of too high a nature for the faculties and temper of man to be trusted with ; he must, therefore, content himself with what he sees established by the order of nature, and with the improvement which his faculties enable him to arrive at. The knowledge of his relations to his fellow creatures is the great object of his duty ; a knowledge of his relations to other beings he can

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never acquire. To be just, temperate, affectionate, benevolent, and discreet, is the sum total of morality, and the sanction by which it is enforced, is the general happiness it produces even in the present world. To be inquisitive or fearful about another is the extremity of folly, for if there is another, it must be as little in our power as the present was before our existence ; and yet some people think that the belief of future punishment has the happy effect of frightening men into virtue and morality. Poor and pitiful indeed must that man be who does not act from a superior motive, from the fear of shame, from a love of rectitude, or a regard for his fellow creatures. A rational man, under the pressure of the greatest calamity, tormented by distress or ill health, will console himself with the reflection that he lives under the dominion of an inevitable necessity ; he will endeavor, by the exercise of his mental faculties, to act to the best of his judgment in whatever difficulties he is placed, and then, if he finds them insurmountable, he will wait with patience for relief in that state of nothingness from which he came, and to which he must return, "*where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest ;*" where the happy

and the wretched, the oppressor and the oppressed, lie down together in eternal repose.— Dismissing, therefore, all ideas of a past or a future existence, and considering the one as impossible and the other improbable, let us examine the present state of man, and how he is circumstanced with regard to his physical and social state, and how far each is capable of being improved.

The natural state of man is so much meliorated by the arts of civilized life, that he has become almost another creature. Whether these arts have reached their utmost limit remains yet to be proved; hitherto they have enabled man to conquer many of the evils of nature, but many are yet to be subdued; whether he can ever subdue them, time alone will determine, but if we argue from what has been, to what may be, we must conclude that much yet remains before man has arrived at the utmost limit of improvement.

The arts have greatly improved the natural state of man

Man, in his physical and social capacity, is placed under the law of a rigid necessity, both in things external and in his own actions; the former he cannot control, but the latter allows the fullest exercise of his faculties; to himself, therefore, he seems to be free, and he is so, to act according to the motives which determine

a rigid necessity pervades every action of man

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his choice. The power of choosing to do one thing in preference to another appears to be free will, but in fact is necessity ; it is influenced by a motive.

*decomposition
& Composition
are the
perpetual
laws of
nature*

Destruction is the first law of nature, and all things are kept in a state of perpetual rotation. Matter is continually taking different forms, tho' nothing is lost on the whole. The first propensity of children is to destroy whatever is in their power, and were not this propensity counteracted by the increase of their own reason, and the control of those around them, they would never arrive at maturity. Animals live by the destruction of each other, and men by the destruction of animals; yet this extinction of matter is not real, but apparent. The same particles which form a human body, may in time be converted into air, and become the nourishment of plants ; some substances are longer in being dissolved than others, but all finally change their shape, and are converted into other shapes. It is this constant state of mutation which has given to man the idea of a creative power. That God, who is a spirit, created matter out of nothing, is more difficult to conceive than that matter has existed from eternity, for matter is real and tangible, and we are convinced of its ex-

istence by the evidence of our senses, but there is no evidence to prove the existence of spirit; it is a mere creature of the mind, and therefore its creative power rests only on supposition. Nothing is created but in our imaginations; all other things exist by an inherent necessity, and that necessity has neither beginning nor end. To create is to bring into existence something which never existed before, and where is the being in the universe endued with such a power.—Is it a spirit?—What is a spirit? Did it create itself? How could it? Is it matter? How could dull, torpid matter bring itself into existence?—That it exists and has existed from all eternity, is the only rational supposition by which we can account for its existence, but as we know nothing for certain, the less we say about it the better, for the subject exceeds the limits of our faculties.

The seeming waste of existence which pervades every part of the creation, cannot fail to excite the wonder and surprise of rational beings.—Millions of animals are born one day only to die the next, and millions more are born without arriving at maturity; for what purpose this can have been intended, suits not our faculties to determine; we can only say it does not accord

*definition
of verb
"to create"*

*The changes
eternally
going on
are inexplicable
to human
reason*

Condition of mortality

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*Of the
changes
wch the
world has
undergone
and
their effects*

with our ideas of wisdom and benevolence.

The terraqueous globe has undoubtedly undergone many changes, and therefore, instead of supposing that there has been only one deluge, we are at liberty to suppose there may have been a hundred, for if such an event had not almost entirely destroyed the race of man, there is no reason can be given why we have no arts, no sciences, and nothing but a traditionary account of the world, beyond that period. The supposition of some such calamity can alone account for the small extent of civilization, and allowing the eternity of matter, if there has been one, there may have been many preceding that, of which alone we have any account. The greater part of the known world remains at present in a state of barbarism, and even in those countries which are said to be civilized, the comforts of life are very sparingly distributed, which in general arises from the unequal and partial division of property, and the injustice of governments; but even were these adjusted upon the best and most equal principles, there still remains a great limit to improvement in the condition of man, from the tendency of population to increase beyond the means of subsistence. The principle of population, when

left unrestrained by other checks, is productive of vice and misery, and to restrain it properly we must submit to many privations; the great art is to balance the two evils as nearly as possible, so as to avoid the greater misery. War, pestilence, and famine, are the natural correctives of a redundant population; prudence and self-denial are the artificial checks which are administered by reason; from hence it will appear that man can never be completely happy; the most he can do is to mitigate the evils of his present state; the only means afforded him of doing this is by the exercise of his reason, but as man is formed to imagine more than he can realise, he can never be happy to the utmost extent of his ideas. Imagination will always furnish something which can never be realised.

*Man can
never be
perfectly
happy*

Tho' many of the evils of nature have been mitigated by a state of society, yet these are counterbalanced by many other evils almost equally great, so that the miseries of human life far outweigh its happiness. Many wants and diseases have been introduced which are unknown to the savage state, and the operations of nature are in many instances counteracted, restrained, and perverted; health is often sacrificed to fashion, interest, or plea-

*Civilisation
has obviated
Some, & increased
Other, Evils*

Condition of Mortality

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sure, and many suffer by hereditary diseases, so that life is rendered burdensome by a protracted state of misery. Men contrive to torment each other in various ways which are unknown in a more barbarous state of society; the finest specimens of art, genius, and learning, are often purchased at a very dear rate, by those who produce them, from the envy of competitors, the neglect of the world, and the loss of health; and even the ties of consanguinity are loosened by the collision of interests, so that the nearest relations are seldom the best friends.

prudence &
moderation
it much
under each
these evils.

The evils to which men are naturally subject may, however, be diminished by prudence and moderation, but the love of wealth tempts them to brave the violence of the elements, the dangers of climate, and even the certain destruction of pestilence; were men less eager to obtain wealth, or more careful of the lives of their fellow creatures, many of these evils might be avoided or lessened; it is not, however, merely the love of wealth that tempts men to these dangers, but even the necessity of a subsistence. The savage can procure himself a living in his own country by his bow or his sling, but civilized man, in order to satisfy the wants of nature in himself, and the

the barbarous
the civil
late, comp.

artificial wants of luxury in others, must subject himself to many unwholesome employments, to many perilous trades, and even to the certain loss of life. Here the savage has certainly an advantage over many of the lower ranks in civilized society, but neither state is devoid of its attendant evils; yet were men less ambitious, less avaricious, or less fond of luxuries, they might be content with many things which cannot be purchased without the misery or destruction of their fellow creatures. On the other hand, what is life? for it seems as if in the order of nature, that even a small portion of the luxuries and enjoyments which the world affords, could not be procured without the prodigal waste of it in many human beings. Nature does not seem to have set a very high value upon human existence, when so many are found requisite to be sacrificed to the luxury, or even the comfort, of a few; and every period of civilized society will bear testimony to the truth of the remark, for even the commonest article of use is not procured without the loss of many thousand lives in the employment. Sugar is an article notorious for the great consumption of human lives which it costs, and all commodities brought from foreign countries occasion the destruction of thousands

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by shipwreck, by loss of health, and various calamities; others are not even brought from the bowels of the earth without causing a very great mortality. Such calamities can never be wholly avoided in a state of society—a state so far preferable to the unsocial life of a savage, as to make these evils disappear, when it is considered how much comfort and pleasure they procure for the survivors. I only mean to say, that they may be in some degree lessened. In no one country, at any period of the world, have all, or even half, the men of that country, arrived at that state of improvement and happiness for which, by their nature and faculties, they seem intended, or, their soil and climate are capable of affording. The advantages of both have been wasted and squandered.

*The state
of War,
common to
Barbarians
as well as
civilized
nations*

War, which has hitherto desolated the habitable globe, is common to both the natural and civilized state; whether it is less destructive in the former or the latter, seems not hitherto to be determined, yet the fact is not to be disputed, that no nation of which we have any account has ever been at peace for thirty years together, tho' many have been at war for that period. War, therefore, seems the favorite employment of man, and as it is, in some mea-

sure requisite to keep down a redundant population, it will probably never be entirely banished from the world; it certainly, however, gives us no very favorable opinion of a system in which it is an indispensable ingredient.

Man, in a savage state, is a totally independent being, he does every thing for himself; whereas the social man, from the highest to the lowest, is in different degrees dependent upon others for the supply of his wants, his pleasures, and his comforts; this difference is solely created by property. The pleasures of the savage are simple, almost to monotony, and inseparably connected with his wants, while those of society are factitious and varied in infinite degrees; yet there are some which, to the disgrace of civilization, partake in a great degree of savage ignorance and ferocity, and it is not too much to say, that the generality of mankind reject the refinement which society places within their reach. The lower ranks of people in all countries are little better than savages in their manners, their minds, and tempers. Connected with society only by the wants of their superiors, and restrained from plunder and rapine only by the pressure of authority, they seem to be tied to those above them by the force of law, rather than

*The Savage
& the Social
States, com-
pared.*

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united by a community of interest; while this continues to be the case, civilization is not complete, and society is rather a forced union than a friendly compact. Men are by nature savages. *Homo homini lupus*, well describes the species—for tho' somewhat tamed by society and education, we are impelled by nature to prey upon each other, in a savage state literally, for there are yet *anthropophagi*, or men eaters; in a civilized state we prey upon each others' property and comfort. So far we harmonize with the rest of the creation, for all living creatures live by the destruction of life either animal or vegetable. And yet such is the power of education, that it is capable almost of changing the nature of man.

On
property &
the natural
& artificial
states of
society

Equality of property is by no means the indispensable cement of society—it is directly the reverse, for its tendency seems rather to create a savage independence, concentrating each man in himself, than to establish a state of general exertion arising from reciprocity of interest. When every man is sufficient for himself, he has no need of the aid of others; but the variety of our wants and pleasures brings men together into a state of mutual dependence and general harmony. The most desirable period of society is that in which

The most
desirable
state of
society.

nature, corrected and improved, is the foundation of our habits, pleasures, and institutions; for tho' the social man is almost a factitious animal, it is possible for him to unite a regard for the simple dictates of nature, with the pleasure derived from the utmost exertions of art. When nature is entirely abandoned, and every valuable propensity which she implants is sacrificed to the prevalence of fashion, or to the influence of whim and caprice, man is no longer in a state to enjoy the happiness of which he is capable, but becomes from that moment the slave of others, and of his own vanity, presumption, and ignorance. He adopts a mode of living which is utterly inconsistent with every end and purpose of a rational being, and perverts the first great object of society, which is mutual comfort and general improvement. To live agreeably to nature, without despising the conveniences of art, is to unite the natural and the civilized state as far as they are capable of coalescing together, and seems to promise a degree of improvement equal to the highest excellence of our nature.

*Effects
of Fashion
on Society*

*Advantage
of living
agreeably
to nature*

Longevity, simply considered, is not a desirable possession. To extend a mere existence, or a life of disease, is not be wished for,

*on
Longevity*

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by any rational being ; yet such is the nature of man, that it requires an uncommon degree of misery to conquer the love of life—a propensity which is beneficial to the species, tho' not to the individual. To prolong a life that is useful and pleasant, is one of the best gifts of nature, of fortune, or of prudence, but certainly one of the rarest, for the best and most estimable of mankind have generally the worst constitutions, and can hardly, by the most rigid self-denial, extend their term to the common length of human existence. On the other hand, there are some, who, by their internal strength and vigor, defy even vice and intemperance for a very long period. The constitution of our bodies generally depends upon our parents ; it is therefore fortunate for the greater part of mankind, that those who lead the most intemperate lives, beget their children before their vices have taken such hold upon their constitution as to propagate disease ; but in other instances, which too frequently happen, hereditary malady, united to personal imprudence, adds to the general stock of disease and misery, which deforms the fair face of civilized society. The longevity of the savage is more rare than that of the social man ; the inclemency of the seasons, the violence of

climate, and the alternate extremes of labor and repose, exhaust his natural strength at an early period. Moderation in all things is the law of enjoyment, and therefore those of the lower ranks of society who are moderately fed, and use moderate exertion, or even those who lead a life of hard labor, generally live the longest, and those who live in a cold climate more so than those of a hotter; yet, in all climates, those who are free from the corruption of hereditary disease, and live according to the rigid rules of morality and prudence, stand the best chance for longevity. The pains and pleasures of the savage are few, he is therefore little in the power of fortune, and is chiefly affected by the elements; the relations of civil life create a variety of pleasures, but they also bring with them an infinity of troubles. The loss of friends, the collisions of interest, the attacks of disease, are all considerable diminutions of the comforts afforded by civilization. Suffering is the lot of every human being, in different degrees and proportions.

The operations of nature and the actions of men are nothing more than certain causes producing certain effects by an inevitable necessity. Man may murmur, but he must submit

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*on the
operation
nature &
the action
of man*

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to a disposition of things the most apparently unjust ; he must submit to see virtue insulted and degraded, while vice and folly are triumphant ; to see youth, beauty, and talents sink into the grave, while age and decrepitude live to torment and be tormented ; to see money heaped upon the worthless, and the worthy oppressed by poverty ; all this happens in the regular course of things, but to whom it happens is the effect of chance. I have suffered much from the delicacy of my own feelings, and the want of feeling in others. The idea of nations and individuals being punished for their actions, arises from that barbarous theology which represents the Deity as a revengeful and malicious being, who delights in the sufferings of those whom he has created, and hardens merely to punish. It is a narrow, bigoted, and illiberal sentiment, the remnant of Jewish divinity, and unworthy of Christians or rational beings ; for, philosophically speaking, all the events of the world are but the result of natural causes, into whose origin we are not able to penetrate. Let those, therefore, who pronounce thus harshly on the measures of a being whose nature they are unable to comprehend, be taught humility and submission from the consideration of their limited faculties, and for-

bear to judge decisively where they are not supplied with the means of decision. The purposes for which the events of the world are established can never be known by human nature,—they are infinitely beyond our reach; all systems, therefore, which pretend to account for what cannot be accounted for, are defective in this material particular, that there is a limit to their researches which they cannot pass, and therefore they only wander in folly when they attempt to explain what can never be developed. And yet no man who looks at the history of the world, either in past or present times, can deny that it has been and is a vast theatre of crimes, of murders, massacres, usurpations, and intrigues, occasioned by the passions of mankind. Who then will say that it is governed by a Being infinitely wise and benevolent? A Being who causes so much evil cannot be both wise and good. Divines tell us that God does not cause these things, he only permits them; this is a distinction without a difference. Humanly speaking, the misfortunes of mankind are the effects of their own imprudence, philosophically speaking, they are the result of an inevitable necessity, for one course of action naturally leads to virtue and happiness, and another to vice and

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misery, and these are the result of just or false calculations, which are founded on the immutable and eternal relation of things.

*virtue if only
satisfactory
motive for
action; but
happiness
is not
the end, for with
its existence
is formed.*

Mankind, in their various stations, act from a variety of motives, and he who is actuated by the most worthy, will eventually do the most good to himself and to society. There are many substitutes for virtue which are sufficient for the common purposes of life, and the generality of mankind; the restraints of law, the force of opinion, the prevalence of custom, the love of reputation, and even the forms of honor, supply the place of virtue, so as to keep society together. Virtue, or the love of rectitude, is the only satisfactory motive, and the only means of rendering mankind completely happy, but happiness does not seem to have been the end for which the universe was formed, yet in all creatures the desire of it is strongly implanted, and this desire engages man, above all others, in a constant struggle with the evils of nature and of society. Man cares a great deal about Nature, but Nature cares very little about man, she torments him in various ways while living, and finally puts an end to his existence. The highest excellence which he seems intended to arrive at, is an almost unlimited improvement in knowledge, and so far as this confers happiness, he

may be happy; but it is a sort of happiness which consists more in the pursuit than in the acquisition; whether a future life will confer on him more substantial bliss, he never can determine; it seems a sort of Pisgah prospect, which he can enjoy only by the force of imagination. Nature, we are told, has intended all things for the best, but it must be allowed, that she has given to the generality of men no very valuable present when she gave them existence, and that those who are unhappy without any fault of their own, have a right to complain of injustice and cruelty. The existence of one miserable being in the world, is an invincible argument against the belief of a Deity, infinitely wise and benevolent. The laws of Nature are either fixed and invariable, or they are dependent on the will of a capricious Being—if that Being is not capricious, then his will is in conformity to the laws of Nature, and Nature and God are one. Man may conceive the existence of an independent Being, but he can never prove it. To create the world from nothing, is more inconceivable than that it has existed from eternity.

Tho' the evils of life must be severely felt by men in all stations, and by some more than others, there are not wanting arguments of

*necessity,
reconciles
us to all
the evils
of life.*

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great weight to reconcile us to their pressure, independent of any religious consideration; of all these the most powerful is their inevitable necessity; for such is the nature of man, that we readily acquiesce in whatever we persuade ourselves is without a remedy, or happens to us independent of our own conduct.* Much consolation may also be derived from seeing that our lot is not singular, but that all are subject to calamity, and that many suffer more severely than ourselves. It also is no small comfort to have it in our power to think, that whatever may befall us, we have done our utmost to make others happy; and that tho' we have failed in acquiring happiness ourselves, we have not contributed to make the world worse than we found it, but have increased the general sum of virtue and knowledge; and tho' we should not presume to consider ourselves more than mere mechanical agents, composing part of an immense universe, we at least may rejoice that we have been instruments of good, for the promotion of happiness and morality. By reasoning thus, we are more like rational beings than by flying for consolation to the

* *Sors est sua cuique ferenda.*

Manil. lib. 4. 6. 22.

hope of uncertain futurity ; but whether we are religious, or whether we are merely moral, does not depend on ourselves ; the consolations and the terrors of religion are not in our own power and arise from circumstances, over which we have no control, they are more the result of imagination than of reason, but at any rate they are no more of our making, than we are the makers of ourselves— God, is said to be an uncreated Being, but all the world is uncreated, and has to my idea existed from all eternity.— The operations of nature in some instances produce good, and in others evil, and therefore cannot proceed from infinite benevolence. The instinct of animals is said to be an admirable proof of divine wisdom, but it is no more so, than that fire should burn, or water quench it. The formation of the human body shews a wonderful adaptation of different parts to different useful ends, but they are as well adapted to produce pain when out of order, as pleasure when they perform their functions. The formation of stones in the kidneys and gall bladder, tends immediately to the production of exquisite pain, from the smallness of the passages thro' which they are forced—therefore to argue for the wisdom of providence from what is good, and neglect to consider what is defective,

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is a very partial mode of reasoning. All that can be said with safety on this subject is, that the universe is sufficient to excite the wonder and admiration of man, and when I am asked who made it, my answer is, "I cannot tell."

on the general deception of the world Men are not what they seem any more than women, and the generous savage, unaccustomed to represent things otherwise than as they are, starts with surprise at the deceptions which men practise on each other; for such is the sophisticated state of civilized life, that no man is to be believed for his words, but rather to be suspected of intending the contrary to all that he professes. The world is full of fraud, deceit, and selfishness, and he who wishes to acquire any tolerable share of its comforts must be constantly on his guard against the arts of his competitors, and he who is born to hereditary wealth must be equally careful. Health and reputation are the most valuable possessions, but money is not to be despised, and he who neglects to acquire or preserve it, must not wonder if he is neglected. The world cares very little about individuals, individuals therefore must take care of themselves, and if they wish to be respected, must study to acquire those things which will always ensure respect, viz.—character and money.

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.


The difficult
of reconciling
of omniscience
of God, with
freedom of
AMONG the many difficulties in the doctrines of religion, which have put faith and reason at variance, and puzzled even the most determined believers, that of reconciling the foreknowledge of God, with the free will of man is, without doubt, the most troublesome. Divines, philosophers, and poets, have tried to remove it, again and again, and left it just where they begun; some honestly confessing that the narrowness of our comprehension is not equal to the difficulty, but that, no doubt, it will be cleared up to us in a future state, that is to say, when it will be of no use to us, if it is any thing more than a mere speculative enquiry. To cut the knot which cannot be untied, is a concise mode of arguing, not much suited to the inquisitive spirit of the present times, and savors, perhaps, a little of the arbitrary decisions of former ages, when men who

without rule and control? There can be no such thing. The material world we see is governed by fixed and invariable laws, and is the mind of man less subject to restraint? Are there no rules by which the conduct of rational beings is regulated? No such things as motives by which a man is impelled to choose one thing in preference to another?

Supposing the world to be governed by a supreme intelligent Being, let us enquire whether he acts by fixed or variable laws, whether by a general or a particular Providence. To imagine that the Maker of the universe (if such a being exists independent of matter), either did not, or could not, foresee, when he formed it, every possible contingency, and that he did not so dispose the laws of matter and mind as to produce the effects he intended, without the necessity of perpetual interference, is to derogate from his wisdom and his power; it is a doctrine which must have originated from a very little mind, but has been believed by many great ones, and being the doctrine of the English church, has found many advocates among men of the first-rate talents, but all the talents in the world are not sufficient to make it credible with any one who considers it as applied to God instead of man;

*on the folly
of Believing
a particular
providence*

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*Key to
the Heathen
Mythology*

to the one it is degrading and insulting, to the other it is flattering and consolatory. The heathens personified these imaginary interferences, and had divinities for every place and every circumstance; and this is the whole secret of the heathen mythology, it is a personification of human qualities, of the operations of nature, or the events of the world. Minerva is wisdom, Æolus is wind, Mars is war, Saturn is time, which eats up its own children, and Jupiter is the air, and he (as well as all the other gods), is subject to Fate or Necessity, which is considered as unalterable, and inexorable. Moses, the first lawgiver, who ever ventured to promulgate the unity of the Deity, laid claim to his particular protection for the nation of the Jews, in exclusion of all the rest of mankind, and no doubt the success and continuance of his religion and laws is principally owing to this pious fraud; but every page of his writings which makes the Deity a party to the massacres and murders of the Jewish nation, which supposes him to reject and harden other nations or individuals, is inconsistent with those ideas which we form of an omnipotent and benevolent ruler of the universe. And yet every part of the Jewish and Christian religions supposes the

*The Theology
of Moses
makes God's
interference
particular.*

interference of a particular Providence, because each of them lays claim to a particular revelation. They may indeed, in one sense, be said to come from God, and so do plagues, pestilence, and famine; they are parts of the general system, but as to their being particular interpositions, to the exclusion of other religions, or other nations, the idea is impious and ridiculous, and nothing but the narrow sectarian spirit of bigotry could have countenanced and supported such a belief. Are the Persians or the Chinese less the creatures of the Deity than the Jews or the Christians? If he did not communicate to them the means of obtaining his favor, will he punish them for not believing what they had no opportunities of knowing? If he does not punish them, where is the use or benefit of these revelations? And if he only rewards them according to their knowledge, is he not partial in the distribution of his kindness? The notion of a particular Providence then, as it relates to nations, is blasphemous, and not less so with regard to individuals. To suppose that the Deity suffers a man to be brought into a difficulty, and then steps in to help him out, is little less than ludicrous; yet we have been seriously told, that such a man was saved from shipwreck, storm, or fire, by a

*The folly
of that
opinion*

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particular interposition of Providence. The very words are a contradiction to each other, for Providence comes from the Latin word *providet*, which signifies to foresee, in the limited sense as applied to men; but in its higher application to the Divinity, means to foresee every thing; now if the Deity foresaw the man's falling into the difficulty, he must, without doubt, have foreseen the means of extricating him, and have produced both by a regular train of causes and effects, or his knowledge and his power are limited. In all those instances of sudden preservation, the attention of observers is caught by the nearness between danger and death, and that seems to be something more than natural, which is nothing but the operation of cause and effect, and if they will but allow that it is not miraculous, the wonder ceases; for that one man should be saved in a shipwreck, by laying hold of a plank, requires no further interposition of Providence, than that the rest should be drowned, if the plank could save but one; if it had saved a hundred, then he might be said to have interfered, and to have worked a miracle, for such is the only meaning, which we ought to give to a particular Providence.

*origin
of vulgar
opinⁿ ab^t
a particular
providence*

*The irrationality
of believing
in the interfe^{ce}
of the Deity.* That the Deity, every now and then, interposes in human affairs, that he favors particular

sects and nations, and that he hardens the hearts of some that he may shew the greater kindness to others, is a notion which could have originated only from a weak or an artful mind; yet such has, in most ages, been the opinion of mankind, derived not, indeed, from the free exercise of reason, but the arbitrary control of a few individuals, who have, in all nations, directed the public opinion for their own interested ends, and caused it to be believed that the government of the world is only a government of expedients, and that the Deity continually interposes his power for private and particular purposes. Even supposing the universe to be governed by an omnipotent and omniscient Being, the existence of such a Being is incompatible with human liberty, and if there is no such Being independent of Matter, the supposition is equally untenable.

If the laws which regulate matter are fixed and invariable, why are not those of mind, supposing them to result from the same organization, and if this be allowed, then it follows that there is no such thing as liberty opposed to these laws, and that we seem to be free only because we have the power to deliberate, but that our choice is constantly influenced by a motive, and that motive by a series of causes

*That
Necessity
impels even
all our
Voluntary
Judgments*

*objection
to this
position
answ -*

which are lost in eternity, as a watch appears to go by itself, till we understand the mechanism by which it is put in motion. To this opinion many and powerful objections will doubtless be raised; first it will be said to strike at the root of all morality, by inducing men to believe that as they have not the power to avoid doing evil, they may indulge themselves in every species of wickedness. Are there none who do this without believing in necessity? and may not men equally believe themselves impelled to do good? The fallacy of this argument lies in not giving the opposite opinion its full extent, for the principles of morality, which are either implanted by nature or acquired by imitation and habit, are as much a part of the general system of the moral world, as those propensities and temptations to vice which seduce or impel others, and no motive can operate upon man which is not the result of natural causes; therefore we are just as safe from the dangers of vice under the belief of necessity, as if every man believed himself a free agent. Next it will be said, that every man's own feelings are a direct contradiction to the belief of his actions not being free; "we know," says some one, "that every action we perform is either the result of deliberation or

perform is either the result of deliberation or of a violent temptation, but in both these cases we feel that the mind is equally free." True it is that we seem to have the power of choosing, because when two things are proposed to us, we must take the one or the other, and at one period of time they seemed indifferent, and even after our choice, we think we had the power to have chosen the reverse; but this is fallacious, for we acted from the motive which was strongest at the time, and that motive was only the result of impressions, which arise as much from the mechanism of the mind, as seeing does from that of the eye; these motives impelled us to act, as much as the heavier weight inclines the balance; so that we might just as well say we might have acted differently, as say that if the lighter weight had been the heavier it would have turned the balance. As to actions that are trifling, the power to deliberate is so frequently exercised, that in time it ceases to be perceived; in these we seem to act with a greater degree of freedom, but in reality there is not the least difference. Popularly speaking, we are moral and accountable agents, actuated by motives and governed by hopes and fears, but philosophically speaking, we are mere machines, im-

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pelled by a power of which we have no knowledge, nor even any conception. It suits very well, the loose and gross ideas of the vulgar, to personify that power and call it God, but men of deeper reflection consider the whole universe but as one immense machine, which is self-existent and has existed from all eternity. To examine this matter accurately, let us ask what is this mighty independent faculty which puts us out of the power of Nature, subjects the world to our dominion, and futurity to our choice? A mere operation of the mind exercised upon the objects of perception or sense; for what more is the will? and if the mind is a part of the universal system, its operations must be subject to the general laws of matter. According to the system of necessity, vice is no more in our own power, than virtue; we act in both cases under the impressions which certain objects make upon our senses, and these senses move our desires, desires operate on the will, and the will produces the action: the rectitude or depravity of any man's conduct, therefore, depends on the impressions which he receives in his youth; for these impressions, frequently repeated, become habits, and form the character of the man: hence will be seen the necessity of a virtuous education. Let no

man be alarmed at the idea of his being a mere machine, for at any rate he is not of his own making, and, therefore, has no more right to claim a liberty of action, than the right of making himself; he can do nothing which is not intended by a superior power, and, therefore, he need not fear being impelled to vice by an irresistible propensity, for if such is the will of Providence, it is not in his power to resist, tho' he may suffer for his imprudence: I will not venture to maintain, that whatever is, is right, but I will affirm, that it cannot be otherwise than it is. The origin of our errors seems to be in the doctrine of a future state, for if the mind of man is not free, he cannot be the subject of reward or punishment; but this doctrine, invented and supported by priests and legislators to keep men in subjection to their power, having been established long before men began to think of themselves or the world around them, they united foreknowledge or the established order of things with free will, which if they had reasoned more accurately, they would have found could not exist together. †

From all that has been said, it must follow that Nature or God, or whatever it is that keeps the world in motion, does not act by

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*Fore-knowledge may exist in the Deity, without personal
influencing human actions. (See p. 330.)*
• Vide also Melton's *Dev. Lxx*: 153.

Liberty & Necessity

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partial and temporary laws, that his government is not a government of expedients, for unforeseen occasions, and that we are mere agents of a superior power. To what consequence does this doctrine lead? To nothing worse than that we are subject to a fixed and invariable principle by which the world from all eternity has been regulated, and if it is right that one man should be vicious and another virtuous, it is so disposed because it could not be otherwise, and we can no more disturb the order of the universe than a mite or a mail. Let us then submit with resignation to the state of things which is established, from a consciousness of its inevitable necessity; this does not forbid the exercise of human virtues or wisdom, nor can it prevent or increase the operation of vice, for both are parts of the same system. Men whose delicacy, or whose piety, is shocked at the idea of making what they please to call God the author of evil, are forced to vindicate his goodness, at the expence of his power, and raising up another, or a rival power, whom they term the Devil, make him the cause of all moral evil, while God is only the author of good. A notion so childish could have originated only in the infancy of the world, when men never reasoned on the nature

of things, but believed implicitly all they were told, and when priests were the only repositories of knowledge, and knowledge was derived from any thing but reasoning and experience.— Should these opinions be true, they can do no harm ; if false, not more than others have which are yet believed ; but it is expected, probably, that they should be shewn capable to produce good. First, then, they strike at the root of all bigotry and superstition, regarding all systems of religion as the invention of men, they teach resignation to the events of the world, as the result of an inevitable necessity, but while they enforce resignation, they by no means prevent exertion. We are as much formed to submit to tyranny at one time, as to resist at another ; one man is born to create corruptions, and another to remove them ; Martin Luther was as much an instrument in the hand of Fate as Gregory the Great, or Innocent II.— Finally, these opinions limit the virtues or the exertions of man no farther than they are limited by our nature, and as they teach us that every action of our lives, and every event of the world, is the result of an established order of things, they tend to make us more truly moral than any system of superstition, which, by continually calling the attention to

*The benefits
of such
the opinion*

its pretended author or to external ceremonies, withdraws our thoughts from the practice of virtue, and substitutes faith for morality. It is impossible for us to say what we are commanded or what we are forbidden to do by necessity, therefore we have no business to enquire, we have only to enquire how far the general interest agrees with our own. Men who believe in a God, too often take upon them to interpret his will; they say that God hardens men's hearts, that he punishes nations and individuals, and that he visits the sins of the fathers upon the children. When considered as the operation of natural causes and effects, these opinions can do no harm; but when pretending to proceed from a knowledge of the divine will, they are convenient instruments for fraud and villainy to work with upon human credulity, and tend to keep mankind in subjection to a gross and degrading superstition. The idea of a God endowed with human passions and feelings, as the God of every religion is, is the most complete bar to human improvement that could have been conceived—because when men make their own minds the standard of the Deity, and imagine that Being all excellent to whom they attribute the lowest of human infirmities, those infirmities will con-

stantly find an apology in the conduct of a "jealous God,"* a God of vengeance,† and a God that makes the innocent suffer the punishment of the guilty.‡ All ideas of a God derived from human nature are degrading and ridiculous, and my reason will not suffer me for a moment to believe in such a Being. If by a God is meant that vital spirit, that active principle, which moves the whole mass of matter, God is the *anima mundi*, or soul of the world—that I understand, but if by the term God is meant a spiritual Being, distinct from matter, endowed with human faculties to an infinite extent, that I cannot understand, and therefore cannot believe. ✱

* Exod. 20. v. 5.—† Deut. 32. Rom. 12. v. 19.—‡ Rom. 5. v. 8. 2. 10.
v. Strabo, lib. 7. p. 457. Ed. 1707.

*One we to believe nothing we
cannot understand*

Bible Societies

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REMARKS ON THE BIBLE SOCIETIES.

*Truth,
should
fear no
scrutiny*

IN committing this part of my Book to the public, which contains a direct attack upon the divine authority of the scriptures, I feel that I am liable to some small risque of adding another martyr to the cause of truth, and I have a recent example of persecution before my eyes, sufficient to terrify men of stouter nerves than myself; but I cannot, I will not believe that at this enlightened period it can be considered criminal to discuss the merits of a book, by some held sacred, provided the discussion be conducted with decency and moderation. Even were the utmost scurrility, vulgarity, and abuse employed to render it contemptible, surely they who are convinced of its divine origin, can never fear the use of any *human* means to degrade it in the eyes of the world—for if the arguments by which it is assailed are unsound, they may be repelled

by sounder arguments, and as to abuse if it ever does harm, it can only be for a season, and will ultimately recoil upon those who employ it. At any rate, if the religion I have proposed to examine, is from God, no effort of mine, nor of any other man can destroy it, for God will defend his own with a power which no human efforts can successfully oppose. Man may be strong, but God must be stronger; and according to the heathen maxim, *Fate is strongest of all*.—The progress of toleration within the last fifty years has been wonderful, all sects are permitted to exercise and to propagate their opinions with impunity, and even infidelity is not wholly proscribed.—A less period than fifty years, I trust, will give to infidels of all descriptions the utmost liberty to profess their opinions. Religion may suffer from such a toleration, but morality can never suffer from the utmost freedom of discussion, for morality is founded on the common interest of mankind, which will always prove its best protection; and even Christianity, so far as it is practicable, whatever may become of its doctrines, will maintain itself as a rule of conduct while it is found consistent with general utility; but to give it a fair trial, it must have no external support from fear or interest.—

*The progress
Toleration
anticipat.*

different Societies above alluded to, must of course depend on the merit of the books they wish to disseminate. I have therefore thought it worth while to examine the contents of the Bible and the Prayer Book somewhat in detail, and I must premise, that tho' I have long ceased to consider the former as a book containing a divine revelation, I by no means deny that it is a book of considerable merit, and were it properly abridged, or even as it is, were it circulated only as a book of Hebrew mythology, history, and morality, it could not be read without considerable advantage to all ranks, but when put into the hands of the people as a book divinely inspired, and containing the will of a supreme Being, it is capable of producing, and has produced, considerable mischief in the world, because it represents that Being in colors the most odious and disgusting, as cruel, implacable, and revengeful, subject to more than human weakness, and actuated by more than human resentment. The Bible is a fruitful source of imposture and folly; it is impossible to enumerate all the sects which have originated from it, they are almost as numerous as the letters of the book, and are all at variance with common sense and reason. Every day

*1/2 The Book
"a fruitful
source of
imposture
& folly"*

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produces some new heresy, and, therefore, I have no hesitation in saying, and I will omit no effort to prove, that before the Bible can be of any extensive use to mankind, it must be divested of its divine pretensions, and received as a mere human composition. I will therefore attempt to shew that it cannot be a divine revelation; for in order to prove the truth of a revelation, we must first prove the existence and nature of that Being by whom it is revealed, and secondly, that it contains things contrary to reason and experience. With the first of these propositions I have nothing to do at present. I am not bound to prove the nature of God, I need only assert that according to the deductions of reason employed on this subject, we conceive God to be endowed with all the attributes of wisdom, dignity, and power, which can possibly exist in any uncreated Being, and by this test I will attempt to disprove the pretensions of the Jewish religion, as contained in the Pentateuch, to be a divine revelation. The first fact related in the Bible, viz. the creation of the world, abounds with so many contradictions, and impossibilities, that it cannot contain a true recital of that which it pretends. In

Gen. C. 1 v. 1 the first chapter of Genesis, v. 3. we are told that God said, "Let there be light, and there

*in the creation
of light (the
day & night)
antecedent
to the sun*

was light," and in v. 5. we are told that this happened on the first day; yet v. 16 tells us that on the fifth day God created the sun. Now if the sun is the cause of light, then there could be no light before the sun was created, and therefore these two verses are in direct contradiction to each other, or day must arise from some other cause than the sun, for God called the light day, before he had created that which distinguishes day from night. The sixth and seventh verses are so exactly conformable to things as they seem to be, and so much the reverse of what they really are, that no man inspired by divine wisdom could have written them. The idea of a firmament dividing the water, is such as would strike an ignorant observer on looking above and below him; he sees in the one, what he takes to be a real substance, studded with luminous bodies, and from whence he imagines the rain and other vapours descend, and he imagines also a place above the firmament which he calls heaven; below him he sees several great expanses of water, which he conceives to be augmented or rather caused by the water above—and yet these things are not what they seem; for an attentive observer, of nature, even without any astronomical knowledge, will easily perceive that the blue ex-

Gen (105)
" 111

L. 647

*"The Firmament
dividing the
waters"; the
common Vulg.
error.*

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panse, which he once imagined to be a solid body, is nothing more than the immensity of space, which being totally colorless, seems to be blue only as contrasted to other objects—and that the rain, &c. which seem to descend from the sky, come from no greater height than the clouds, which are condensed vapors drawn from the earth—and as to any such place as heaven above the earth, it exists only in imagination; because this earth and the atmosphere which surrounds it are but parts, and not one millionth part of the whole planetary system. The 26th, 27th, and 28th verses tell us that God created man in his own image, from whence we are to infer that God has a bodily form like man; an idea which degrades the dignity of the Supreme Being, tho' it exalts that of his creatures, and therefore it is more reasonable to suppose that man formed God after his own imagination.

*That man is
the image of
God
Gen C 1
v 26, 27, 28.*

*Man kind
can only
discover
secondary
causes*

The reason and the senses of man enable him to comprehend the operation of secondary causes, or the visible works of nature; he is therefore led by curiosity, the result of his reasoning powers, to imagine that he can find out the cause of nature itself, a search in which he generally bewilders, without enlightening his mind; hence it is that different nations

at different periods of the world, have attributed the origin of all things to different causes, and worshipped different objects as so many different gods. The most ancient belief among all uncivilized nations, is that of Sabæism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies. The Jews are the first nation who believed only in one God and gave him a bodily form, but that opinion is not less ridiculous than the follies of Paganism. To return to the Pentateuch, it is said in verse 27th, that on the sixth day "God created man in his own image, male and female created he them," in chapter ii. v. 5, the author tells us that after God had finished all his work and rested on the seventh day, he found out that there was not a man to till the earth, so he formed him out of the dust, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life—he then formed a garden in which he placed the man, and gave it him to till and to enjoy, but he found that he had not done enough for him, for he had no partner of his labor and his joy, and so v. 18, "God said it is not good for man to be alone, I will make an help meet for him," and from the following verses it seems that God threw the man into a deep sleep, and took out one of his ribs of which he made a woman, and brought her to the man. Now let

Gen. 1.
v. 27

C. 2 v. 5.

on the
Creation of
Man

of
woman

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me ask any impartial person if it is possible that any author divinely inspired should have written any thing so grossly inconsistent and contradictory as these two stories of the formation of man and woman, and let me also ask the ablest divine to account, even humanly speaking, for so obviously erroneous and ridiculous a narrative. Various have been the attempts to give a rational interpretation of the 3d chapter of Genesis, which contains the history of the temptation of Adam and Eve, and their subsequent banishment from Paradise. Some have considered it as an allegory, and some have taken it literally; the former is probable, but the latter is utterly impossible, for so taken it would degrade the Being whom it is the object of Moses to represent as the maker of the universe, into the humble occupation of a taylor, because verse 21 says, that "unto Adam and his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them," and verse 24, represents the same Being as a cutler, for it says, "he placed a cherubim with a flaming sword, which turned every way to guard the tree of life," now if there are swords in heaven, who could make them but God? All this is impossible, and therefore we can make nothing more of the passage than to suppose it an alle-

Gen^d Cuij
the fate
of Adam
& Eve

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gory to represent the evils brought upon mankind by the principle of population, compared with the fruitfulness, or rather unfruitfulness of the earth, for sorrow is denounced to the woman as the mother of children, and labor to the man as the tiller of the ground, and the first fruit of their union was the murder of Abel by his brother Cain, an example which has been followed in every succeeding generation. The fifth chapter of Genesis gives an account of the age of those men who are called Patriarchs, which as it is utterly inconsistent with every other account of the early ages of the world, must have arisen from some mistake, occasioned by our ignorance of the Hebrew, a language very little understood, even by those who took upon them to give the Bible in an English Translation, and much less by those who are now its authorized interpreters. The sixth chapter of Genesis contains hardly one word at which a rational believer in the Deity ought not to shudder, as utterly inconsistent with all the ideas which our reason teaches us to form of a Being so dignified and exalted; v. 6th, tells us, that "God repented that he had made man, and that it grieved him at the heart," and in v. 7th, he takes the barbarous resolution "to

Cain & Ab

Gen C VI

2.1

2.7

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The deluge

destroy man from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air." Supposing that man had offended his Creator (an idea utterly inconsistent with his omnipotence), what could the birds and beasts have done to excite his indignation? How any sensible man, not blinded by religion, can suffer himself to conceive any thing so unworthy of the Deity is hardly credible; indeed the whole story of the flood is to be accounted for only by supposing it written by some one who had formed the supreme Being completely like himself, subject to all the passions and weaknesses of human nature; for he even goes so far as to degrade the Maker of the universe to the occupation of a ship builder, when he gives Noah directions about the form of the ark. It is an endless and almost a useless labor to examine all the ridiculous passages of the Pentateuch, one more fact with regard to the deluge will be sufficient to shew that if such an event as a general overflowing ever happened, the intercourse and conversation between Noah and the Creator of the universe is utterly impossible, because a fact arising from natural causes, is related as a supernatural demonstration given by the Deity of his re-

The ark

solution to destroy the world no more by a deluge, and this fact must have existed from the creation of the world. If there was rain before the deluge, there must have been rainbows, and if so, how could that be regarded as a novelty? The story is evidently a fable, intended to account for the present state of the globe, and tho' it is possible and even probable, that there may have been a general deluge (partial inundations of considerable extent, we are certain there were), yet the story of Noah and his ark is so improbable as to deserve no credit with any man who possesses an understanding beyond that of a child.— Supposing that the account of the conversation is only figurative, and that God did not actually condescend to give the minute directions recorded in the sixth and seventh chapters of Genesis, how is it possible that one man and his family could, on one single spot, collect all the animals of the world together, or that any vessel they could build, could be large enough to contain so great a number? Besides, we are told in the seventh chapter, v. 23, "That every living substance upon the face of the earth was destroyed." It is also worthy of remark, that when Noah came out of the ark, he sacrificed of every clean beast unto the

*the
Phenomenon
of Rain*

§ c vii.

c vii.

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*The Sacrifice
of clean beasts*

Lord, and the Lord smelled a sweet savor, long before the distinction between clean and unclean beasts was established, by the eleventh chapter of Leviticus. It seems that Noah, who first cultivated the vine, like the Bacchus of the heathens, first taught the abuse of it; and when hardly awake from the effects of his intoxication, he cursed his grandson Canaan and all his posterity, not for his own fault, but for that of his father, who had seen the old man's nakedness while he lay asleep. What must we think of the Deity, who could fulfil such a curse? Surely he is not the God of the Christians, who could punish the innocent for the guilty. Of this Noah we are told that he lived to be nine hundred and fifty years old.—Believe it who will, I believe it, not.

*Malediction
on Canaan's
posterity*

*on the story
producing
diversity
of languages
i.e. the
Babel*

The difference of languages is one of those unsearchable facts, for which the book of Genesis pretends to account, in a mode the most improbable that could have been imagined; it tells us, that a number of men had formed the impious design of building a tower whose top might reach to heaven, Gen. chap, xi, verse 4. Now it is well known that according to the acknowledged system of the universe, there are no such places as heaven and hell; for there is nothing below the earth but minerals, and

nothing above it but air, and that as the universe is composed of many worlds, which are suns, moons, and stars to each other, where the atmosphere of one world begins, that of another ends; no man, therefore, who believes in the Newtonian system, can believe in a material heaven and hell, the actual residence either of bodies or spirits. The hell or heaven of every man is his own breast; the evil which he does is his only Devil, and the good he does, his only God. To build a tower to heaven might have been attempted by men who believed in heaven, above the clouds, but that heaven could not have been believed in by any man divinely inspired, because the effect of such inspiration must have been to enlighten him as to the true state of things, and not to accommodate itself to his errors and false conceptions. The most material objection to this account of the diversity of language is, that it does not perform what it promises, because had they all continued to speak one language, it would not have enabled them to complete what they had intended, nor could they otherwise have performed it, would they have been restrained by a diversity of languages, considering how easily languages are learnt, and how little occasion there was

*The real
Heaven
& Hell*

for language in such an operation as that of building a tower?

*The Story
of
Abraham*

The whole story of Abraham is so little consonant either with Jewish or Christian morality, that the writer of the book of Genesis must have known little of the religion of nature, on which both of these are founded. The first we hear about Abram is the barrenness of his wife, and yet by means of that wife he was to become the father of the Jewish nation. The Jewish religion commences with the selection of Abram as the chosen servant of God; whether that selection actually took place, or was the invention of after times, must be a matter very difficult for those to determine who read the Bible with the prepossessions of their youth, but to those who enjoy the free exercise of their reason, it is no more to be believed than the stories in the Arabian Nights; first, because it relates things miraculous and improbable; and secondly, because these things are not to be found in any other book. As Moses is allowed to be the author of all the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion, there is every reason to believe that having adopted the traditions of his ancestors, he invented stories to support these traditions, and the ceremonies which he afterwards im-

posed on that singular nation. That circumcision *Circumcision*
 was practised among the Jews before the time *antecedent*
 of Moses is not to be doubted, because there *to Moses,*
 existed a physical reason for it in all hot coun-
 tries; but that God actually spoke to Abram,
 and said, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a *enjoined to*
 land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, *Abram*
 and they shall afflict them four hundred years,
 and that nation whom they shall serve I will
 judge, and afterwards they shall come out with
 great substance, and thou shalt go to thy fa-
 thers in peace, and in the fourth generation
 they shall come hither again, for the iniquity
 of the Amorites is not full," is so evidently
 adapted to the circumstances of the Israelites
 before and after they had left Egypt, that it
 must have been invented by Moses to induce
 them to follow his commands, and to submit
 to that authority by which he formed them to
 be a separate nation. The sixteenth chapter
 of Genesis relates a very indelicate transaction *Sarai*
 on the part of Sarai, Abram's wife, who griev-
 ing that she was childless, requested her hus-
 band to take her maid-servant to his bed, v. 2, in
 hopes that she might be more fortunate than
 herself from her husband's embraces; and tho'
 the old gentleman was in his eighty-sixth year,
 neither she nor the virgin was disappointed, for

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Hagar

lo! the handmaid conceived, and from that time her master took such a liking to her, that Sarai began to repent of her project, for a scene ensued not uncommon in many decent families, when the maid finds she is preferred to her mistress; Hagar began to give herself airs, and to look upon Sarai with contempt, and most likely, had not the prudence of the writer concealed it, we should have had a scene described somewhat like one in Joseph Andrews, book i. where the master of an inn excited his wife's jealousy by no very wonderful preference of the maid to the mistress; but Abram very prudently consented to put an end to all further strife, and turned the poor girl to the door, at his wife's request; but having had to do with such a holy man as Abram, she was not forsaken, for an angel of the Lord came to her and asked her what was the matter, and when he found she had been turned out of her master's house, he comforted her, and told her that she was with child (as if she did not know it), but that tho' it was her first, it should not be her last, "for *he* would multiply her seed exceedingly, so that it should not be numbered for multitude," (a pretty impudent speech for an angel!) whether he meant it literally, or only as God is said to multiply the

*angel
appear.
to Hagar*

seed of any one when he makes his generation numerous—for surely it was just about as modest for an angel to say, “I will do so and so,” as for a man sent on a message to say, “*I* desire your acceptance of a brace of tench,” and not “*My master* desires your acceptance of a brace of tench.” The angel, however, gave the girl very good advice, and persuaded her to go back to her mistress and make a proper submission; and so it seems she did, for her son Ishmael was born, and afterwards circumcised, in her master’s house. Now considering the solemn institution of matrimony in the second chapter of Exodus, v. 24, which, as our church says “was instituted in the time of man’s innocency,” Vide *Marriage Ceremony*; the conduct of Sarai in thus tempting her husband to commit adultery, and of Abram in yielding to the temptation, was justly reprehensible; unless it should be urged, that they who pretend to an intimate communication with the Deity, are privileged above other mortals, and that they are allowed to commit iniquity without censure or impropriety. We have seen that even Pharaoh, a heathen, considered the crime of adultery with abhorrence, tho’ it would have been no crime in him if he had been deceived by Abram’s calling her his

*Ishmael
born*

Ex ij 24.

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Gen xij. 13
The Call of
Abraham

sister; a pious fraud, which tho' in Abraham was excused, would in any other man have been considered as a base disguise,—Gen. xii, v. 13. The seventeenth chapter of Genesis relates the call of Abraham to be the founder of the Jewish nation; the mode in which it is related is degrading to the Deity, and inconsistent with the declaration contained in another part of the Bible, that “no man hath seen God at any time,” for it expressly says, “God appeared unto Abraham;” they conversed together, and Abraham even ventured to question the power of the Deity, when he said, “Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old, and shall she that is ninety years old bear a child? O! that Ishmael might live before thee,” v. 17. 18. God then promised that Sarah should bear him a son, whom he should call Isaac, and “as for Ishmael, I have heard thee, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make of him a great nation.” If natural children are so honored by God, why should they be treated otherwise by men? surely God never meant that a stain should be fixed upon bastardy, tho' man has judged otherwise, and wisely to; for to place bastards

Gen xij 17-18
Isaac
promise

in the same rank with legitimate children, is to lessen the respect due to matrimony. The twenty-second verse contains a circumstance of so trifling and familiar a nature, as to be totally inconsistent with any ideas which men of elevated minds can have formed of the divinity, "And he left off talking with him, *God conversed with abrah* and God went up from Abraham,"—(up to heaven must be meant no doubt); so that we have here the great God of heaven, that spiritual and incomprehensible Being, "whom no man hath seen or can see," talking familiarly with a mortal, and then after a conversation, which does him no credit, flying up to heaven. The man who considers the book in which these things are contained, as a divine revelation, must have a very different idea of the Divinity from what he is represented by the Deists, or even by the Christians; for the latter only bring him upon earth in the person of his Son. The commencement of the eighteenth chapter is so ridiculously familiar, as to be altogether laughable did it speak only of men, but when relating the conduct of the messengers of heaven, degrades them to the rank of very ordinary mortals. The first verse tells us that "The Lord appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre, while he sat at *Gen xviii*
The story of abraham
11:23 Augu

his tent door, in the heat of the sun," but the second says, "He lifted up his eyes, and lo! *three men* stood by him," and he ran to meet them, and said, "My Lord," not my Lords, "pass not away from thy servant," and when they had consented to stay, he hastened into the tent to Sarah, and told her to make some cakes, and ordered one of his young men to dress a calf, which with butter and milk (for the cakes were forgotten), were set before them, and while they did eat, he stood by them under a tree—the rest of the conversation not being very proper for female ears, I must suppress it; suffice it to say, the heavenly messengers told Sarah she should have a child, at which, after an indelicate expostulation, the old woman laughed. The 13th verse begins thus, "And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child which am old?" v. 15, "Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh." Can any thing possibly be more ludicrous or more expressly calculated to degrade religion in the eyes of sensible men than the whole of this account? First of all, the confusion between the angels of God, and God himself, then the familiarity of the trans-

*Sarah's
laugh**Gen. xv. 15*

actions, such as the angels eating; the bustling haste of Abraham to get them a good dinner; the womanish curiosity of Sarah in listening at the tent door; the telling a lie to evade the charge of laughing at a messenger of God; and the extreme folly of her supposing that by a lie she could conceal her rudeness, or mistrust, or call it what you will, from the great God of heaven, who is supposed to know all things; the whole transaction I repeat it, is the most ridiculous and inconsistent with any rational notions of the Deity that any mortal ever ventured to deliver to the world; tho' as a mere story, it is entertaining, and gives a lively picture of the simplicity of ancient times. The story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, was no doubt well intended to excite our abhorrence of a detestable crime, and from the belief of their signal punishment, it has had the effect; but it is told in a method so ludicrous and improbable, that had it been found in any other book than the Bible, which early impressions have sanctified in the minds of some people, it would have been read only with laughter and contempt. The ridiculous bargain between the Almighty and Abraham; the attempts of the people of Sodom to ravish the angels; and the transformation of Lot's

*destruction
of Sodom*

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Lot &
his wife

wife into a pillar of salt for her curiosity; are all so thoroughly unworthy of a transaction in which the Deity was concerned, as to shew that the man who wrote it had received no inspiration but that of folly and credulity—but as if it was not enough to be ridiculous, all this was succeeded by a transaction at which human nature shudders, and which to our idea of natural and unnatural crimes exceeds those of the Sodomites by many degrees. The daughters of Lot finding that there was not “a man to come in unto them,” (these are the words of the Bible), determined lustfully to

Lot's
daughters

make their father drunk, and then to excite him to commit incest, which they each successively accomplished, and each bore a son by their father; and yet this horrid crime received neither one word of reproof from the writer, nor the slightest punishment from heaven. To this affair of Lot succeeds another equally singular:

Abraham's
deception
at Gerar

Abraham it seems, journeying from *thence*, but we are not told *whence*, had occasion to travel thro' the kingdom of Abimelech; and for fear that his wife, *then ninety years of age*, should be taken from him by some other man, he said she is my sister. Abimelech, therefore, supposing her such, took her for his wife; but God in a dream soon convinced him of his mis-

take, and told him he was a dead man for what he had done; Abimelech conscious of *intending no harm*, gave the Lord a very saucy answer, and said, "Wilt thou then destroy a righteous nation?" Abimelech then expostulated with Abraham, who after explaining the motives of his having recourse to the fraud, excused himself by a pitiful evasion in saying, "She is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not of my mother;" The Lord, upon Abimelech's dismissing her, remitted the punishment he had intended against the nation, for his fault, "healed Abimelech and his wife, and his maid-servants, and they bare children;" *Gen. xx. verse 17.* Did Abimelech bear children too, as well as his wife, and his maid-servants? Shortly after this Sarah brought forth her promised child; which so far excited the mirth and jealousy of Hagar, the repudiated and reconciled hand-maid, that she mocked at her, and Sarah saw her mocking, and said to her husband, "Cast out this bond-woman and her son; for the son of this bond-woman shall not inherit with my son, even with Isaac; and the thing was grievous in Abraham's sight, because of his son; chap. xxi. verses 9, 10, 11." Notwithstanding this, however, poor Hagar and her child were turn-

Gen xx 17

*Hagar &
Ismael
killed off
xxj. 9. 10. 11*

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ed to the door, and the latter was so near starving, that his mother not able to bear the sight of him dying, "set him down a bowshot from her, that she might not see him depart;" but here in strict compliance with the rule of Horace, a difficulty arose which could not be got rid of without the aid of a God, and so down came an angel to save the child's life; and the same angel as before, I imagine, with the same presumptuous confidence, tells her to lift up the lad, and hold him in her hand: "for I will make him a great nation," verse 18; "and God opened her eyes, and she saw a well, and she filled a bottle with water, and gave the lad a drink, and God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became a great archer." The next extraordinary transaction related in Genesis, is the trial of Abraham by the command of God to sacrifice his son; and for this signal act of faith he was rewarded, as he well deserved, with a promise "that his seed should be multiplied as the stars of heaven, and that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed," a prophetic declaration, which has been forcibly applied to Jesus Christ as the promised seed. The venerable Sarah soon after departed this life, aged one hundred and twenty-seven years,

*The angel's
protection
of them.*

Gen xxi 10

*Abraham's
test of faith*

*to the
prophecy*

*Sarah
dies*

and Abraham purchased for her a most costly place of interment. Keturah, the second wife of Abraham, brought him five children, but "he gave all that he had to Isaac," chap. xxv. v. 5.; and yet the next verse says, that "To the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, he gave gifts, and sent them away eastward." In our eyes, that is in the eyes of all just and honest men, Abraham dealt very unjustly with these children; for tho' natural children are not to be placed on an equality with those which are legitimate, it is both cruel and unjust to neglect them, or send them adrift with a small pittance, and to leave them nothing at the last. The conventions of society may modify and abridge the claims of nature, but they cannot destroy them altogether. The transaction by which Jacob defrauded Esau of his father's blessing, tho' not noticed with any mark of disapprobation by the writer, is totally contrary to those rules of moral honesty, without which religion is a vain and wicked pretence. The character of Jacob is marked throughout by that worldly cunning which scruples nothing, and is at all times fertile in expedients for the advancement of its worldly interest, chap. xxx. from verse 25 to 43. It must be remembered also that

*Keturah
Abm's 5th w.
Gen xxv 5*

*Jacob &
Esau*

*Jacob's
Character*

Gen xxx 25

12 Tribes

The Bible
considered
as a Book
of History
& Morality

Gen xxviii 20

he became the father of twelve sons, heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, by two sisters, and by various concubines; and his cowardly fear of his brother Esau, whose just resentment he had so much reason to dread, presents him in the light of a man, who tho' he dared not defend his misdeeds, to save himself from danger, would humble himself even to those whom he hated. The open, disinterested, and generous character of Esau, is a fine contrast to his brother's meanness. And here let me remark, that the Bible considered only as a book of history and morality, is in many places finely written, and contains many useful and excellent precepts, and they who consider it in this light only, may shew ample justice to its merits. It is only when viewed as a divine composition, that it can sink in the estimation of judicious and impartial men, for there are many parts of it equal, if not superior to the best heathen moralists and historians. As a book of instruction and entertainment, therefore, it may safely be consulted by those whose judgment has been matured by time and experience, or even by young persons under proper restrictions, but not as the word of God, or a book calculated to inspire just notions of a Divinity.—Genesis xxviii. verse 20, represents Jacob mak-

ing a singular bargain with the Deity, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again unto my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." The whole story of Jacob, his wives, and his concubines, is hardly to be reconciled either with religion or morality. The incest of his son Reuben is contrary to the first, and his own conduct with his father-in-law, Laban, in his bargain about the sheep, was as base an artifice as ever was practised by any of his modern descendants; yet both are justified by the pious commentator, Ostervald, whose Bible is chiefly read by the lower ranks. The horrid transaction related in the thirty-fourth chapter of Genesis, is hardly to be paralleled for treachery and cruelty in the history of the most savage tribes, much less should it have been found in the history of God's own people.—The sons of Jacob were reproached by their father, it does not seem however that their conduct was disapproved by heaven, if we are to judge from their being each at the head of a tribe, or the fathers of that people who were the chosen people of God.

The thirty-seventh chapter of Genesis com-

*Jacob's
bargain
God -*

Reuben's

*Joseph
his Brethren*



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*Genesis
ends with
Joseph*

mences the history of Joseph and his brethren; and in many respects it is one of the most entertaining and interesting stories recorded in ancient or modern history; it is a picture of human nature correctly drawn from the original in the early ages of mankind, and the simplicity of the stile accords with the simple grandeur of the subject.-- With the life of Joseph ends the book of Genesis, or book of the creation, as it is translated from the Hebrew into the Greek. Of this book Moses was the reputed author, but as all that he relates happened long before his birth, it can only be from tradition that he received its contents, for he makes no pretence to inspiration. The tradition was probably enlarged by his own invention, for the whole object of the book being to support the designs of Moses in making the Jews a separate nation, and leading them forth from the Egyptians, he wisely employed his whole mind to convince them that every thing he did and told, was by the special direction of heaven. The first object of Moses was to place himself at the head of the Jewish nation, and for this purpose he contrived two expedients; the first, to deliver them from their Egyptian bondage; the next, to preach to them a new religion, the worship of one God; but the God

*Moses
object in
writing the
Pentateuch*

which he preached to them, was a God of his own making, endowed with human passions, and subject to every human weakness; altho' Moses makes him speak of himself with all the ideas of majesty and sublimity. The great law-giver of the Jews flying from Egypt, his native country, for having murdered an Egyptian, and hid him in the sand, married the daughter of a priest of Midian. The first interview of Moses with the Almighty was near mount Horeb, *Exod.* chap. iii. when a long dialogue took place, at which no one else was present. These dialogues, between the Deity and the founders of new religions, are not uncommon in the history of nations. Such were the nightly meetings between Numa Pompilius and the goddess Egeria; such were the conferences between Mahomet and the angel Gabriel. The advice given to Moses by the Almighty, is by no means consistent with our ideas of a divine Being; he promises to harden the heart of Pharaoh, and then to punish him for that hardness in refusing to let the Israelites depart. He instructs Moses also to cause the Jewish women to borrow valuable jewels of the Egyptians, which were never to be returned; the Jews therefore, have the highest authority for every act of fraud they

Moses' first interview with God

Exod iii

Moses
departs
from
Midian

The Lord
"Seeks to
Kill him"

meets
Aaron

The Exodus

practise upon the Gentiles.—Being fully inspired with the idea of a divine command for the deliverance of his nation, Moses departs from the land of Midian, and meets God on his road, who reminds him of the magic arts he was to display before the Egyptian king, to enhance the crime of his obduracy. The twenty-fourth verse of chap. iv. is ridiculously familiar, and unconnected with the context.—“And it came to pass by the way, in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him,” (most likely because he had neglected to circumcise his son Gershom.) Soon after he met his brother Aaron in the wilderness, a fit place to concert together their grand scheme of political and religious polity; in a few days they arrived in Egypt, and began to put in execution the scheme for the deliverance of Israel; when after many ineffectual attempts to obtain the leave of Pharaoh, and many pretended miracles by both, the whole people with one consent secretly departed from Egypt, to the amount of many thousands, and in a few days they arrived in that great desert which separates Egypt from the land of Judea, at that time possessed by the Canaanites, &c. whom Moses very wisely determined to drive out, by pretending a divine claim to their

territory. The sixteenth chapter of Exodus, verse 2, tells us, that after the people had been one month and fifteen days from Egypt, they murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness; for "they thought of the flesh-pots of Egypt, and that they did eat bread to the full", and they told their leaders that they had brought them out into the wilderness to be starved. On this it is said, that the Lord hearing their cry, told Moses that he would rain bread from heaven; but having seen Exodus vii. verse 11, 22, that the magicians of Egypt could also perform miracles, our faith in these extraordinary deviations from the laws of nature must be very strong if we believe them merely from written testimony; and it ought to be remembered, that no miracles were ever performed among the Jews after they became known to other nations by the conquest of Alexander; before that, they had every thing their own way; whatever they were weak enough to believe, their historians told them; and they certainly were a people of very marvellous faith, for there was nothing they could not believe. The whole history of their passage thro' the desert is a series of miracles, and therefore, so far as it was miraculous could not have happened; and to us who

*The People
murmured
aj. Moses*

*Heaven
rain'd from
Heaven*

*miracles
by the Egypt's
magi.*

*Miracles
ceased with
the Jews after
they became
known to
other Nations*

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*The evidence
offered for
these
miracles is
insufficient*

live at this distance of time, even supposing it had happened, could not be proved by any human evidence. The twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, and some other prophetic declarations of Moses, are said to be a sufficient testimony of the divine revelation imparted to him; but before these pretended predictions can have any effect to that purpose, it must be proved that the religion he delivered was worthy of God; that the God he shewed to the Israelites was in all things a Being such as the reason of men at all times and all ages can approve, in short, that he is a Being infinitely wise, beneficent, and powerful; for if the Godhead from whom this religion came, and the religion itself are not such as are worthy the adoration and practice of mankind from their infinite excellence, it is only begging the question to say that the religion is from heaven.— But even allowing these prophetic warnings to the Israelites to be the genuine text of the Bible, and not interpolated by the Jews, who are a people capable of any species of fraud to serve their own purposes, it is very easy to believe that Moses, a man of uncommon talents, would have taken equal pains with Mahomet (whom all Christians deny to have delivered a divine religion), to perpetuate the Jewish

*The Policy
of Moses*

people as a separate nation; and nothing surely could be better calculated for that purpose, than the institution of ordinances and ceremonies, which should keep them apart from all the nations of the world. The intimate union of their civil and religious polity, was an expedient admirably adapted to separate them from all other nations; for no man who is acquainted with the influence of religion on the human mind can doubt for a moment, that priests are a set of men much better calculated to retain their authority than either kings or lawgivers. It is, therefore, most highly probable, that it is the religion of Moses which has kept the Jews together for so many hundred years, and not merely their civil polity, tho' a system admirably contrived. Having fully impressed the Jews with the belief of a powerful, unrelenting, and terrific Deity, who would visit the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation, and blast the temporal prosperity of those who disobeyed him; it is easy to believe, considering the infinitely greater effect that present punishments have upon the mind than those which are future, that there should be at this moment so many true disciples of Moses, and so few of Jesus Christ. The one denounced temporal punishments, the other

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*The religious
institutions of
the Jews
completely
separate them
from other
nations*

*That Moses'
institutions
were human,
not divine -
proved by
the tests of
justice, &c.*

Ex. xxxi. 18

future ones; and no man will doubt which has the greater effect, even on the minds of believers. Moses wisely foreseeing that the nation of the Jews, like other nations, might be conquered and dispersed, took every possible pains to render their religion perpetual; but whenever the Jews shall cease to adhere to their religion, or other nations shall admit them to an equality of civil rights, they will not much longer continue a separate people, but gradually amalgamate with the nations among whom they are dispersed. Had they been thus dealt with two thousand years ago, we should never have heard of the prophetic declarations of Moses being completed. It will be sufficient in order to prove that there was nothing divine in the religion of Moses, to consider in many instances the conduct of God, and the people of God, and to try them by the test of those principles of justice, humanity, and policy, which are observed and respected by all civilized nations, and will probably continue to be so while the reason and the interest of mankind continue the same as they are at present. The thirty-first chapter of Exodus, verse 18, is a sufficient evidence to any man of sense, of the falsity of all Moses's pretensions to a divine revel-

tion; for besides other passages in which he gives the Deity a material form and substance, he expressly there says, "and he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." Now this is so completely impossible, that according to the rules of human testimony, it will go to falsify the whole of what he has elsewhere related; for should a witness in a court of justice, relate a fact so much at variance with possibility, no credit whatever could be given to any thing else he could say; it would be taken for a fraud, for the effect of a prolific imagination employed to varnish over some fictitious tale, which the witness had an interest in supporting, but it could never be received as the evidence of a man seriously relating what he knew and believed. In the thirty-second chapter of Exodus, we are told that when Moses came down from the mount, he found that the people had mistrusted his account of the Deity, and relapsed into their former idolatry: in order, therefore, to frighten them, he represented a conversation with God Almighty, who had seen their iniquity, and in which he intreated the Lord for them, but the Lord would not

*The stone
Tables are*

*not cons.
with hu
testimo*

Ex. xxxi

*The relap
of the peop*

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*Moses
alarms
their fears;*

*to them,
allays them
by personal
interposition*

hearken unto him, and said, verse 10, "let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them : but I will make of thee a great nation." The prudent legislator, in order to make the most of himself with the people, pretended that he besought the Lord, and said, " Lord ! why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, whom thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt?—Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, for mischief did he bring them out, to consume them from the face of the earth?"—" And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." " And Moses went down with the two tables in his hand: and the tables were the work of God, and the

*Exod. xxxii. 11, 16
That
Moses has
formed God
after the
image &
character of
Man.*

writing was written by God, and graven upon the tables." *Exod.* chap. xxxii. verse 11 to 16. No other argument can be wanting to a reasonable man than this single passage, to prove that the whole Jewish revelation was a contrivance of Moses to impress his religion on the people; for a man who could talk so unworthily of God; who could represent him as a mere mortal, subject to the passions of anger, jealousy, and resentment; who could speak of him as retracting at one moment, what he had fully purposed the moment before, must have

very inadequate conceptions of a spiritual and universal Being: with Moses he is only the God of the Jews, and a God like the Jews themselves; cruel, revengeful, selfish, irritable, and inconsistent; and surely the great God of heaven could never consent to have himself so represented by a mortal, as to be exclusively the God of one people; to harden the hearts of all others, and then to punish them for that hardness of heart, which was the result of his own determination. It is somewhat singular that by the account of Moses the Lord was visible only to himself; for in the thirty-third chapter of Exodus, tho' the cloudy pillar stood at the door of the tabernacle, the Lord talked only with Moses; he was not seen by the people, but he "talked to Moses face to face, as a man talketh with his friend," verse 11; and yet verse 20, the Lord said, "Thou canst not see my face, for no man can see my face and live;" verse 23, "I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face can not be seen." It is impossible to produce all the passages, even in the five books of Moses, that are inconsistent with any rational notions of the Deity. The few more which I intend to cite, will, I trust, be sufficient to convince every unbiassed mind, that a religion

*God is represented
as visible
only to Moses
Ex xxxiii*

*God talks
to Moses
face to face
yet Moses
can only
see his
"back parts"*

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General
reasons
for disbelief
in Revelation

which represents God in a character so inconsistent with the unlimited attributes of mercy, justice, and benevolence, cannot be a divine religion. If therefore in such a space of time since the creation of the world (supposing it to have been created), no revelation of the Deity has been given to man, consistent with reason, it is a very just presumption that no such revelation will ever be given; because the nature of God and man, if it be allowable to argue from that which is known to that which is unknown, are so essentially different, that the faculties of man are unable to receive such a revelation; there is no method of conveying it to mankind which shall equally convince all nations; and a mere partial revelation is unworthy of the Deity, because such a revelation of his will must ever be liable to dispute and contradiction. Besides, its being partial and subject to a variety of interpretations, affords an argument against the infinite wisdom and benevolence of the Deity, as tending to create divisions and dissensions among mankind, rather than to disseminate peace, virtue, benevolence, justice, and harmony. It is not my intention to enlarge on the merits of the Jewish law, tho' I am willing to allow them; they are such as

entitle Moses and his brother, who had also a share in their formation, to the highest praise for wisdom and policy in some instances, and in many others for their humanity; my only design at present is, to convince those who are open to conviction, that it is not a divine revelation. To see God, and to talk to him face to face is not permitted to man as the Bible tells us; and yet without that, no man can be sure he has had a revelation from God: a revelation is therefore impossible. The exhortations contained in the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy for the destruction of idolatrous cities, is little consonant with the ideas of a God of mercy, but thoroughly consistent with that of a man who was resolved to extirpate the nation of which he was a leader, by the extirpation of those whose land he was determined to occupy. Having thus by all the arts which human ingenuity could contrive, ensured the perpetuity of the Jewish nation, and brought them within sight of the promised land, Moses, like Romulus, vanished from the sight of the people, in order to give them an idea of his being received into heaven, and thus acquire for his laws and institutions the greater sanctity and solemnity. He was succeeded by a leader of his own appointment, in every respect qualified to fulfil

*The legislators
of Moses
Landable*

*Moses
dies*

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his intentions, and complete what he had begun.

*His Success
Joshua*

The first thing worthy of remark performed by Joshua, was to cause the river Jordan to separate, and let the ark and the people pass over dry; the next was to make the walls of a

*The miracle
taking of
Jericho*

large city fall down at the sound of a trumpet, when all the people, and every thing alive were put to the sword, except Rahab the harlot and her friends, because she had received the spies that were sent by Joshua. The story

*the punishment
of Achan*

of the punishment of Achan, chap. vii., is hardly to be paralleled in history; the Israelites were not permitted to save any thing belonging to the nations whom they were commanded to root out, and Achan having taken of "the accursed thing," (that is, a part of the spoils of the enemy's garments, silver, and gold), he, and his sons, and his daughters, and his cattle, and all that he had, were stoned with stones, and burned with fire; wherefore the name of the place was called Achor. The twelfth chapter records a miracle, which, according to the solar system as it is now understood, is no miracle at all; for as the earth moves round the sun, which is placed in the centre, the sun never moves; and, therefore, the man who told this as a miracle, shewed his ignorance, and proved that no credit is due to his

*on
the sun's
standing
still at
Joshua's
word.*

testimony. To notice all the instances of iniquity and immorality contained in the Old Testament; would be a dreary and a tedious task; I will content myself with a few more, which will be sufficient to prove that it contains not a divine revelation. The second chapter of the First of Kings contains such a proof of deliberate treachery and cruelty in two of the most beloved servants of the Lord, as ought to be sufficient to convince the most hardened believer, that their religion was all a pretence; that it was mere words, and had no effect in subduing their vicious propensities.

"The days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, and said, I go the way of all the earth, be thou strong, therefore, and shew thyself a man;" in verse 5, he goes on thus, "Thou knowest what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, do thou, therefore, according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace," a tolerable legacy of cruelty from a father to his son! but nothing compared to verse 8 and 9, which I have not room to quote. Solomon, however, was not deficient in following his father's example; Adonijah, another son of David, had started as a competitor for the crown with Solomon, and his cause had been

1st King C.

*David's &
injunction
Solomon*

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espoused by Joab the son of Zeruiah, and Abiathar the priest; but finding they had no hopes of success, they surrendered themselves, trusting to Solomon's mercy, who promised that not a hair of them should fall to the earth; yet when the said Adonijah petitioned for leave to take Abishag the Shullamite, David's female attendant, to wife, Solomon thinking it an indignity, put them all to the sword, with the most merciless treachery, 1 Kings, chap. ii. Let any man read the Bible attentively, and he will find innumerable instances of equal wickedness, tho' the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Ecclesiasticus, are manuals of wisdom which ought to be in every man's hands.

*The wisdom
of the Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
& Ecclesiasticus,
exceptions to
the 82 parts of
the Bible.*

*The historical
parts of the
Bible, considered
Joshua to
Esther.*

The historical part of the Bible, from Joshua to Esther, contains a great deal of entertainment, and some instruction; considered as a portion of ancient history, and the history of a very singular people, separated from the rest of the world by the pretensions of their great legislator to a divine revelation, it may be read privately with much advantage, but it is very improper to be read aloud in a public church indiscriminately; nor indeed ought it to be put into the hands of youth without some selection; for many chapters, at least many verses, contain things inconsistent with that rever

ence which we owe to the minds of children.

The book of Job is full of gloomy reflections on the vanity of wealth and wordly enjoyments; it is most likely a poetical composition, which accounts for the bold personification of God and the Devil, and may be read in many parts with considerable advantage by those who are apt to rely too much on their wealth, their prosperity, and felicity.

The Psalms of David, tho' not all written by himself, contain the meditations of a man who had experienced various changes of life, and are in many parts applicable to every man's circumstances; therefore, setting aside the inconsistency between his piety and his wickedness, they may be read with great advantage, as there are few men who will not find some parts in unison with their own feelings. The frequent personification of Nature and Destiny under the name of the Lord, however pleasing to pious ears and weak minds, is disgusting and ridiculous to those who have looked more deeply into things, and consider the Divinity as a person, to exist only in the mind of man, and as an essence in the works of the creation. The same remark may be extended to the Proverbs, and to every part of the Jewish and Christian religions, where the

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*The Proverbs
recommended*

name of God is invoked or applied, as having a personal existence. The Proverbs, with some few exceptions, are a manual of ancient wisdom, founded on the nature of things, and on the perpetual relations which exist among mankind; they will continue to exist with little variation under every form of society; and, therefore, this book may be read with constant advantage by all ranks and descriptions of persons, as it is clothed in the venerable language of antiquity, and sanctioned by the experience of ages, I recommend it in preference to most of the modern books of morality, which are much too diffuse, and too metaphysical for vulgar apprehension.

Ecclesiastes

The book of Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, contains the reflections of a man worn out with pleasure, and grown grey in iniquity; the gloomy railings of a satiated voluptuary, who had found his frame too weak for the indulgence of his desires; yet they may serve to shew the folly and vanity of indulging to excess, in the enjoyment of sensual delights, and that nothing is truly valuable but wisdom, or a just estimate of human life. It is much wiser to use our enjoyments moderately, than to indulge in them to excess, and then cry out with the preacher, "All is vanity."—Prior has com-

*Prior's poem
on this
Book*

posed a beautiful didactic poem from this book of scripture, of which Johnson says, "It is a poem far from deserving to be neglected, he that shall peruse it will be able to mark many passages to which he may recur for instruction and delight; many from which the poet may learn to write, and the philosopher to reason."
Life of Prior.

The Song of Solomon is undoubtedly a poetical composition, and being written in the warm and luscious phraseology of the east, is somewhat too voluptuous for the cold imaginations of the north. They who can find in it a spiritual meaning, as the translators of the Bible have, might with equal ingenuity spiritualize the Ballad of Robin Hood, or Chevy Chase. It is impossible for any thing to be more sensual, nor more unfit for the delicate ears of English females; it is, therefore, very properly not comprehended in the lessons used for the church service. Whoever wishes to see religion burlesqued by a forced interpretation of its meaning, may consult Dr. Gray's explanation of the Song of Solomon. If it were not upon so serious a subject, and the Doctor a serious man, I should suppose he meant to be ironical.—*Vide Gray's Key to the Old Testament*, p. 303.

Solomon's Song

Gray's Key to the Old Testament referred to

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The Prophets

The prophets, considered as poetical rhapsodists, contain many beautiful flights of imagination, but as serious productions, foretelling future events, I never can consider them, whatever may have been the intention of their authors. As they are capable of any interpretation which the visionary fancies of religious enthusiasts may force them to, they have been applied with equal confidence to a variety of different persons and events, and, therefore, tho' they are not entitled to any degree of credit, they are capable of doing much mischief, and have created much confusion both among the learned and the unlearned.

apocrypha

The Books called the Apocrypha, or *doubtful*, are not considered by the church as dictated by divine inspiration; what it is that constitutes the proof of such inspiration I cannot determine, except it be the pretending to it.

Esdras

The Book of Esdras is historical, and contains much entertainment.

Tobit

The story of Tobit is amusingly ridiculous, but not more so than the Arabian Nights.

Judith

Judith contains the history of a magnanimous woman, and Esther that of a virtuous one, and both are equally instructive and entertaining.

Wisdom

The Wisdom of Solomon, and the book of

Ecclesiasticus, are mines, stores, and treasures of wisdom, if we except their religious belief, and the folly it occasions. *Ecclesiasticus*

The book of Baruch was well calculated to console the Jews in their captivity, and may be read with instruction as connected with that eventful period. *Baruch*

The Song of the Three Children is a thanksgiving to God for his mercy, which they who believe in it may sing with joyful hearts. *Song of 3 Children*

The story of Susanna and the Elders is an amusing and instructive example of hoary iniquity and youthful chastity. *Susanna & Elders*

The history of the Priests of Bel is a proof of what priests will do, and have been doing in all ages for the support of their idols. *Bel*

The Books of Maccabees contain an amusing history, and afford many interesting subjects for painters and poets. *Maccabees*

To sum up the whole that may be said of the Old Testament, it is in my opinion a book of infinite worth, tho' it be not considered as a divine revelation; its greatest fault is the pretension it makes to a pre-eminence over all other books, but as no just claim can be proved to that singular distinction, we must consider its merits altogether independent of such a pretence. The evils of heathen idolatry had *General Estimate of the old Testament*

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been so abundantly proved by the cruelties and the abominations which it sanctioned, that the idea of one supreme and undivided Deity presented itself to the minds of thinking and rational men; as a means of putting an end to the miseries of polytheism; this worship, if it ever had existed, being almost obliterated among the people of Egypt, Moses undertook to restore; but like all religions which are the creation of fallible and finite beings, it contained a great mixture of truth and error; it represented the Deity as subject to human passions, and so far from exempting his worshippers from their excesses, it shewed that tho' less subject to them than their idolatrous fellow-creatures, they were still liable to many crimes and weaknesses; in short, it partook of the temper of its founder. The chosen people of God, as Moses entitled the Jews, were a very singular people, and their history is well worth the attention of the philosopher and the moralist; not because of their pretension to a divine original, but because they have existed as a nation near four thousand years, with very little variation in their laws and customs, or in their national character; and because it contains many examples of disgusting iniquity, and very few of exalted or uncommon virtue.

The historical part of the Bible, however, is not that which most claims our attention, the moral beauties of the Psalms, the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and of those parts of the Apocrypha which are called Ecclesiasticus, and the Wisdom of Solomon, contain food for perpetual meditation and practical improvement; and he that can read them without feeling that he has advanced in wisdom must have a very dull head, or a very callous heart. If any sect should be found to arise who would preach only the morality of the Bible, that sect would make atonement for all the cruelties, follies, and iniquities, which have been caused by its doctrines. From these considerations it is in my opinion much to be desired, that every degree of publicity should be given to the Bible among all people, and among all nations; and when it is left to find its own level in the estimation of mankind without any external aid, it will pass for no more than it is worth, and be considered as a very ancient and instructive compendium of history and morality. The neglect and contempt into which it has fallen, arises from its pretensions to superior sanctity; and men who have very justly considered those pretensions as incompatible with our nature, and with any human

*that of Bible
the general
dissemination
of left to find
its own level*

*Reasons why
it has not
been held
in due estimation*

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composition, have fallen with all the weakness of fallible men into the opposite extreme, and held up the whole of the Bible as a subject of ridicule and contempt, because in many things it contradicted their passions and their reason.

*on the
generality
of objectors
to the Bible*

Others again never deigning to examine the nature of that which they had been accustomed to despise, and passing their whole time in profligacy and dissipation, without a moment's reflection on their duties or their crimes, reject and despise that which they have been told contains so many censures on levity and profligacy, and, therefore, they never open the Bible but with a view to turn it into ridicule, at the same time that they are insensible to their own error, in thoughtlessly abusing what they have taken no pains to understand.

*The weak
& superstitious
reverence
of others.*

The excessive admiration of those on the other hand, who consider every word and letter of the Bible as the effect of divine inspiration, is not less worthy the censure of considerate and impartial men who weigh all things in the balance of wisdom, and judge of every thing by its intrinsic merits, who are ever ready to hear the arguments of opposite sides, but are seldom led away by the passions of either. Such men, and such alone can discriminate between those parts of the Old

*Impartial
men, alone
the proper
judges*

Testament which are worthy of consideration, and those which thro' the ignorance, arrogance, or pride of the writers, merit only to be treated with contempt; such are those which contain pretensions to divine communications, to be "*written with the finger of God*," and to be exempt from all mixture of human weakness. The higher a man exalts himself, the more he deserves to be humbled; so it is with those parts of the Old Testament which pretend to be divinely inspired; they aim at exalting their authors above the common lot of human beings, at dictating to all the rest of the world, and claiming an exemption from that portion of frailty to which all human compositions are liable; and yet it will be found upon examination, that those mortals who are thus represented as the best beloved of heaven, are inferior to the rest of their fellow-creatures, in many things by their weaknesses and crimes. No man ever existed who laid stronger claims to superior sanctity, or to be more beloved of the Lord than David, and yet no man both in his life, and in his dying moments, ever displayed a more cruel, uncharitable disposition, was more the slave of his passions, or more totally disregarded the happiness of others when it came in competition with his own. Notwith-

*David's
weakness
also*

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standing, the blot it contains in such characters as David, and many others who boasted of being the chosen ministers of heaven, the poetical, historical, and moral excellencies of the Bible are so great as to outweigh its defects, and to make it with proper attention, a book for perpetual meditation, a fund of useful knowledge, and a manual of morality, such as almost to supercede the necessity of any other.

*an abridgt
of the Bible
desirable*

A good abridgement of it, would therefore, be a most estimable book; but the difficulty of the undertaking is almost a sufficient obstacle to its ever being properly executed. The chief thing requisite to guard against its doing any farther harm, (for great harm no doubt the idea of its being a divine revelation has occasioned), is to consider throughout the whole of it, the words *Lord* and *God*, as mere figurative and metaphorical expressions to represent the agency of nature, or impose on the credulous, and to give a sanction to the inventions of men. With this reservation the Bible may be safely and profitably studied by all ranks of people, and without a risque of its ever again arming one half of mankind against the other, in support of any religious opinion.

*The New
Testament*

A slight examination of the New Testament will be sufficient to convince any impartial man

how little claim it has to be considered as a divine revelation—on the external evidence by which it is supported, I mean to say nothing, because nothing can be said. It is not known when the different books it contains were written, nor for certain by whom they were written; they are not noticed by any writer of any other nation, and we have no further proof of their authenticity, than the testimony of ecclesiastical historians, all of whom were interested in their divine origin.

*not a
divine
revelation*

The whole life of Jesus Christ, supposing such a man ever existed, is that of an honest enthusiast, who, from a constant perusal of the prophetic writings, had, by giving them a spiritual interpretation, worked himself up to a belief of his being the promised Messiah; tho' in a sense different from what the Jews had been accustomed to understand it: That Jesus spoke much truth and much wisdom, every man must allow, but it was at a time when truth and wisdom were rare commodities; that he only *pretended* to work miracles, must be allowed, if it is allowed that the world is governed by fixed and general laws, which no Being whatever has the power to alter.

*Christ
an honest
enthusiast*

The genealogy of Christ as related by Matthew, contains his descent from Abraham to

*Christ's
genealogy*

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*illegitimate
& broken*

a.

2.
c

*the word
Holy Ghost
analysed*

*on the folly
of the
miraculous
conception*
S.

David, and from David to Joseph, but this descent is neither legitimate, nor unbroken—first, the birth of Phares, the father of Esrom, is stained with indelible marks of incest, fornication, and adultery, and therefore totally breaks the line of legitimate descent, Gen. xxxviii.—from Abraham to Jechonias, the train of succession is to be followed in the books of Kings and Chronicles, but after that it is lost, and we have only the word of Matthew for its existence—but even supposing it to be correct and accurate, of what use is it when we are told in verse 8, that Joseph was only the *reputed* father of Jesus, for that his mother being a virgin, was found with child by the Holy Ghost. What is the Holy Ghost? Ghost is an old word for spirit. What is spirit? It is not matter, and that is all we know about it. Verse 19, 20, says “ that the husband of the damsel finding her with child, would have put her away privily, but the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, and told him that she was with child by the Holy Ghost, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet,” on which the good man, not willing to contaminate that which was produced by a holy spirit, “ knew not his wife, till she had brought forth

her first-born son." Had we read these verses in any of the contemptible nonsense which goes under the name of Apocryphal gospels, we should have treated it as it deserves, but as the gospels we believe in have been sanctioned by the authority of the church for sixteen hundred years, we conceive them to be entitled to all our respect and veneration, and our minds are so completely perverted by the force of long and early prepossessions, that we cannot induce ourselves to believe that what has so long been held sacred, can be ridiculous. The wise men mentioned in the second chapter, must have been astrologers, or believers in the influence of the stars on the conduct and destiny of men; for, say they, "We have seen his star in the east." The story of Herod murdering all the young children is utterly improbable, when we reflect, that all Judea was at that time subject to the Romans, and that Herod held his small degree of power under the Roman governor. The sixteenth and seventeenth verses contain one of those improbable and impossible events which would shake the credit of any history, not written by the hand of the Deity. "And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens open-

The wise men & the Star

The number of innocents improbable

The miracle at the Baptism

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ed unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him." Saw a spirit—Impossible! a spirit cannot be visible to mortal eyes. "And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." The voice must have been the voice of God, therefore God is not spirit, but matter—and if material, then human. Such are the contradictions and follies of all pretenders to revelation. The story of Christ's temptation, which begins the fourth chapter, is one of the most ridiculous in the whole of the New Testament, for it speaks of a personage equal in power to God, whom it represents under the name of the Devil—such were the gross ideas of the vulgar in all countries, and such they are still. The Devil is believed to be a man, with the legs and the horns of a beast—but men of sense and reflection consider this Being as nothing more than the evil dispositions of human nature personified. Good is God, and Evil is the Devil—this is the sum and substance of all religion. The fifth chapter begins the famous sermon on the Mount, which has been called by some zealous Christians, a complete epitome of morality. It is no such thing: it contains many practicable, and many imprac-

The folly
of seeing
a spirit

a.

Christ's
Temptation
ridiculous

Vulgar
idea of
the Devil

Christ's
sermon
on the
Mount

J.
S.

licable precepts, but it contains neither the whole, nor the half of our moral duties.—Chap. viii. verse 16, “When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils.” It is truly astonishing that there should ever have been any question among persons of common sense about the reality of these possessions, for when we consider the vulgar notions about devils, it is impossible to account for stories by any other means than the gross ignorance of the multitude, who conceived some of those diseases of the mind to which mankind are subject, to have been inflicted by the actual residence of Devils in the human frame.

The moral tendency of the gospel was in a great measure opposed to the ceremonial observances of the Jewish law, and had not Christ and his apostle Paul loaded that benevolent system with so many burdensome and ridiculous doctrines, it might have been truly said, as far as regards the most practicable moral precepts of Christianity, “My yoke is easy and my burden is light.” The twelfth chapter begins with a strong evidence of Jesus Christ’s contempt for Jewish ceremonies, and more particularly for that of the sabbath, and his conduct in that respect deserves to be contrasted

with the dreary solemnity of a Presbyterian Sunday, or even with the farcical sanctity observed on that day by some members of the Church of England.

*The parables
extolled*

*Christ's
object*

The peculiar beauty and excellence of Christ's teaching, consists in those parables, or apologues, so common among eastern nations; the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, is almost wholly occupied with these diverting and instructive allusions. The commencement of the fifteenth chapter throws considerable light on the character of Jesus. His great object was to restore the moral law of God, and to shew how it had been forgotten and neglected by the ceremonies and traditions of the Jews; he insists strongly on the necessity of moral purity, in opposition to rites and ceremonies; but to this reforming character, he united also the pretensions of being the Messiah, or temporal Saviour of the Jews; in a spiritual light he certainly would have released them from the bondage of the law, but they looked for a temporal Messiah, and having no power to make good his pretensions, they soon learnt to consider him as an impostor, and as such he was crucified. Verse 32, The miracle which begins at this verse and finishes the chapter, I will take upon me to say could never have been

*The miracle
of the loaves
& fishes*

performed, even in appearance, for no magician could make food out of nothing, neither could he make people believe they were filled. The sixteenth chapter is the most important in the whole book, for it contains the verses on which is founded that immense mass of fraud and folly, which has governed the world for so many ages, under the name of Popery. It seems that Jesus Christ began to doubt whether his disciples were sufficiently convinced of his divine pretensions, and after enquiring what other people said of him, he asked them with considerable earnestness, "What say ye that I am?" Peter, who was either more crafty, or more zealous than the rest, replied, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," which drew from Jesus that pun upon his name, ~~τῆς πέτρας~~ or Peter, which signifies a rock, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will found my church," words more fatal to the peace and happiness of mankind were never spoken, and had they never been spoken, the world would have had cause to rejoice. The seventeenth chapter contains an account of some magical delusion practised on Peter, James, and John, which is commonly called the transfiguration, and for an elucidation of which, I refer my readers to Wraxall's Memoirs of the Courts of

*The foundation
of the papal
power*

*The
Transfiguration*

*Wraxall's
Memoirs
referred to
Vol. 2 p 29*

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*Christ's
Conduct at
his Death*

Berlin, Saxony, &c. vide vol. ii. p. 277. It is by no means requisite to undertake a full and complete examination of all the gospels, in order to prove the unjust pretensions of Jesus Christ to a divine original; whoever reads them with a disposition not previously determined to find excellence in all that they contain, will soon be convinced that they are the joint productions of credulity and imposture, and that with some truth they contain much falsehood, and much impossibility. The behaviour of Jesus Christ, as related by St Matthew and St Mark, in the last scene of his life, fully disproves his claim to Kingship and Divinity, and shews that he was a mortal, not much stronger than the rest of mankind. Fully impressed with the idea of his divine mission, when he was first apprehended, he surrendered himself without a struggle, because, as he said, "*The scripture must be fulfilled,*" on his trial he stood mute, because he refused to acknowledge any earthly jurisdiction; but at last overcome by the sufferings of human nature, and finding that God came not to his relief, he cried out in an agony of pain and of despair, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.*" It is to no purpose to say, that the other Evangelists have not related this ex-

clamation. The authority of the two who have related it, is as good as that of those who have omitted it. If he said it not, they have told a lie, and if he said it, he gave up the belief of his divine mission.

The gospel of St John differs much from the other three, and I believe was composed long after them all, for it enlarges more in the metaphysical stile of the Platonists on his divine original, and the greatest part of the facts it contains chiefly tend to the proof of his Divinity.

The idea of a divine revelation is so contradictory to reason, that had it not first been received in an age of ignorance and credulity, it would never have obtained credit in more enlightened times. It is somewhat singular that all revelations have originated among nations most remarkable for their gross ignorance. How comes it that we hear of no revelations among the Greeks and Romans?—Because the imposture would soon have been detected and exposed. A divine revelation is impossible, if there is no such Being as men have conceived God to be; the only true Revelation is the Book of Nature, this is equally intelligible at all times, to all people, and in all languages. Men first form a God, and then they form a

*St John's
doctrine
derived from
Plato or
the "Logos"
mind*

*The Book
Nature is
only Book
of Revelations*

*The origin
of all
Religions
is personifying
the Vital
principle*

Revelation. The God of Moses was the creature of his own imagination ; no nation before his time had worshipped such a Being. Jesus Christ and Mahomet were inferior to Moses, because they only invented the Revelation, the God was the God of Moses. The great error from whence all Religions have their origin, is that of personifying the Vital Principle which animates and pervades all nature ; when men get beyond that, they may fancy one God or ten thousand. It is difficult to conceive how matter and motion can have existed from eternity, yet it is more difficult to prove that they have not. On no subject whatever, have men committed more follies than on that of religion. They first deified the glorious orb of day, and then cast him down from his throne to exalt another and imaginary being to his place ; they have worshipped all the host of heaven, all the operations of Nature, and now they worship a Being formed from their own imagination ; a God who is every where, and no where ; whom all talk about familiarly, and all confess they cannot comprehend.

*The Epistles
first of
sources
of follies*

The Epistles are chiefly deserving notice as containing the principal doctrines of Christianity, and in them is found the origin of all the follies that have disturbed the world under the

names of different sects, all professing to be followers of Jesus, and yet all differing from each other. The second verse of the first chapter of Romans tells us, that the gospel was promised by the prophets in the holy scriptures, but in what part of those prophets it does not condescend to tell us; and I believe it will be very difficult to find it expressly foretold in any one; and as to interpretations when a thing is obscure, any one may interpret as he pleases, and all be in the wrong; the third verse says, that Jesus was of the seed of David according to the flesh; which is impossible, because Joseph, whose pedigree was traced to David, was only his reputed father. This first chapter contains a doctrine unworthy of God and injurious to man; it makes God unjust, and man rebellious; it makes man to sin against the commands of God, and God to punish that which he has created; in short, it either limits the power of God, or makes man greater than his Creator; for if man can sin against the power and commands of his Maker, he is so far more powerful, and as it represents the wrath of God excited against the wickedness of man, it makes the former a weak, angry, and resentful Being.

In reading the history of the Reformation, it

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*The Reformⁿ
only half
removed the
prevailing
superstition* is lamentable to reflect that men, tho' released from the fetters of a most degrading superstition, still remained attached to a system of faith and doctrine little less contradictory to reason than that from which they had departed; and it is really distressing to see the cheerfulness and enthusiasm with which they laid down their lives, in support of a belief in the doctrines and miracles of Christ and his apostles. Let any reasonable man, whose mind is free from early prepossessions, look thro' the epistles of St Paul, and see if his mind does not revolt at the belief of such propositions as these :--

*Some of
St Paul's
doctrines*

“By the deeds of the law shall no man be justified.” *Rom.* chap. iii. verse 20. “Being justified freely thro' the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth as a propitiation, thro' faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.” verse 24, 25. “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” verse 28. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ,” chap. v. verse 1. “We glory in tribulation: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the *Holy Ghost*, which is given unto

us:" verses 3, 5. "We joy in our God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." verse 11. "The free gift is of many unto justification." verse 16.

The doctrine of original sin, one of the most wicked and ridiculous ideas that ever came into the mind of man, is to be found in chap. v. verse 14 to 21. The doctrine of the immediate operation of the Spirit, which has given rise to so many follies of different sects, is to be found in chapter viii. I have no patience to pursue these things any longer, I only intreat every honest man to peruse the epistles of St Paul, and say, if excepting some good and useful precepts, they are not filled with a perpetual repetition of unintelligible doctrines, at which reason revolts, and even faith itself is sometimes staggered. It is impossible not to perceive, from 1 Cor. chap. i. verse 17 to 31; and chap. ii. verse 1 to 16. that in order to insure this divine monopoly of nonsense, the apostle proscribes the light of human learning, and the exercise of human reason; with such a writer there can be no argument, nor with those who adopt his opinions. I leave, therefore, the whole of these doctrines to the increasing sense and reason

*The doctrine
of original
sin*

*of the operation
of the spirit*

of mankind to consign them to that oblivion they so justly merit.

The Liturgy

The Prayer Book is nothing more than the Romish Mass Book purified and reformed; but how reformed? for it contains some of the most objectionable parts of Popery, and many things contrary not only to the Scriptures, but to the common sense and reason of mankind. The first thing worthy of notice in the Liturgy is the general confession of sins in the Morning Prayer, which makes us perpetual sinners: for if as we are commanded by the law we go to church daily throughout the year, and repeat this confession daily, we never can be supposed to have "attained unto righteousness," but must remain sinners to the end of our lives. The confession is succeeded by a form wholly of Popish origin, and for which no sufficient authority can be found in the Scriptures, for it asserts that "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given power and commandment to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the remission of their sins;" he gave no such commands, but Jesus gave that command to his apostles, who, we are told, were divinely inspired and commissioned; it would be difficult, I believe, to prove any such commission

*The
Confession
of Sin**The
Commission*

to be given to any individuals calling themselves the clergy, whether Popish or Protestant. In the apostles' creed we are told many things hard to be believed;—First, that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost; secondly, that he descended into hell; thirdly, we acknowledge that we believe in the Holy Ghost; (*we ought first to know what it is;*) fourthly, that we believe in the Holy Catholic church; if that means the whole body of Christians, then we should take care how we persecute one another; and fifthly, that we believe in the resurrection of the body. If this means the resurrection of that body which is laid in the grave, St Paul has told us directly the reverse; for he has told us, 1 Cor. chap. xv. verse 50, "That flesh and blood cannot inherit immortality."

The apostles' creed

The creed of St Athanasius, as it is commonly called, which forms a part of the Liturgy, and a material part too, inasmuch as it denounces eternal damnation to all who refuse to acknowledge its divine efficacy, has now, I believe, very few defenders, even among the clergy, for many omit to read it, and many who do, find it hard to swallow and difficult to digest. The Litany, which is commanded to be said or sung, tho' it repeats in substance

The Athanasian Creed

The Litany

ledge:—A clergyman in a small village west of
 Doncaster, whose name was Marshall, a man
 of ancient simplicity, tho' not of ancient wisdom,
 was asked by one of the farmers in the village,
 during a very dry summer, to pray for rain, to
 which he replied with some warmth, "Do you
 think I would do such a thing, when my good
 friend Mr Staniforth has all his hay out?" It
 seems the honest simpleton had no doubt in
 the efficacy of his prayers, therefore he possess-
 ed that which is the chief virtue in every re-
 ligion, tho' he was deficient in that which is
 much better than religion. The number of *improper*
 unworthy men admitted into the office of the *ordination*
 holy ministry, either proves that God is inat-
 tentive to the prayers of the righteous, or that *for the*
 man is more powerful; for in the prayer to be *ministry*
 used in the Ember weeks, God is intreated so
 "to guide and govern the minds of his ser-
 vants the bishops, that they may lay hands
 suddenly on no man, but wisely and honestly
 make choice of fit persons to serve in the sa-
 cred ministry of the church; and that those
 who are ordained to the sacred function, may
 by their lives and doctrine set forward the
 glory of God, and the salvation of all men."—
 How far this is attended to in the ordination of
 drunkards, fools, and profligates, let their

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actual presence, is not quite rooted out of the Protestant communion, and so much holiness is yet attached to the simple element, that the bread and wine which has been consecrated by the priest are forbidden to be carried out of the church, but the curate or minister, and the people are commanded, "reverently to eat the same." A remnant of superstition no doubt, tho' the Rubric says, that in order "to take away all occasion of dissension or superstition, the bread shall be such as is usually eaten," and yet it goes on to say, "it shall be the best and the *purest* wheat bread that can conveniently be gotten;" no doubt intended as a symbol of Christ's purity, and freedom from sin. It is, however, expressly declared, at the end of the service, that the bread and wine remain still in their natural substances, and therefore may not be adored.

Infant
Baptism

The Baptism of Infants is the next ceremony of the church, contained in our reformed Liturgy, and tho' I will by no means attempt to give an idea of all the controversies the subject has occasioned, yet I cannot omit to remark a few of the most prominent particularities of this anti-christian institution.

2. *in Sacrament*

3. *the proper*

4. *day limited*

5. *only for Baptism*

In the first place, to shew how much the ceremonies of the church have fallen into

decay, the Rubric remarks, that "It is most convenient that baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other holidays, when the most number of people come together, as well for that the congregation there present may testify the receiving them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ's church; as also, because in the baptism of infants, every one present may be put in remembrance of his own profession to God in his baptism. Nevertheless if necessity so require, children may be baptized upon any other day."

The whole ceremony of baptism is not only *the whole ceremony* ridiculous, but unfounded in scripture; infant *ridiculous* baptism is not to be found from one end of the *unscriptural* New Testament to the other; therefore it is needless to particularize the minor follies of the rite; yet the signing the infant with the sign of the cross, will shew its Popish origin.— It is also worthy of note, that the ceremony is now treated very lightly, and that even orthodox members of the church have few reasons for continuing to observe it, and those totally unconnected with any divine command. The *motives for continuing its use* first is for the sake of godfathers and godmothers, who are said very often to be of use to children from worldly considerations; se-

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condly, a good dinner; and thirdly, for the sake of having children registered. After signing the child with the sign of the cross, the priest says, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy holy spirit, to receive it for thine own by adoption, and to incorporate it with thy holy church." Is it possible after this, that the same child should fall from the state of holiness, and become a servant of the devil; if so, where is the efficacy of baptism, or where is the power of the Lord against that of Satan and Sin? How lightly the matter of godfathers and godmothers is treated, may be seen from comparing the promises they make at the font, and the exhortation they receive from the minister, with their actual conduct, or rather their total neglect of the child after the solemn ceremony is performed. The compilers of the Prayer Book, fearful, no doubt, that the terrible doctrine which declares the damnation of infants dying unbaptized, should not be inferred or understood from the words of that service, declare that "By God's word it is certain, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, *are undoubtedly saved.*" Great then indeed must be the benefit of that cer

mony, which can save innocent and helpless infants from eternal damnation; but credulous indeed, and dreadfully perverted must be that understanding, which can believe in a doctrine so repugnant to common sense, and to all our ideas of divine and human justice, as the damnation of unbaptized infants; and yet this is the doctrine of our church in the service of baptism, in the articles, and in the homilies—and this doctrine is to be inculcated on infant minds, and to be taught not only in England within the pale of the church, but is thought worthy to be disseminated thro' the whole of the civilized world, by the supporters of National Education. • Who can say that with such a doctrine remaining in her books, and avowed by her ministers, the English church requires no reformation? Rejoiced I am, however, to say, that there is one of her ministers, and a bishop too, who has boldly disavowed this doctrine in these energetic words: “A proposition which asserts that infants dying in the womb, or before baptism, (as the passage which his Lordship quotes from Fulgentius imports), will be tormented in everlasting fire, is so entirely subversive of all our natural notions of justice and mercy, that it cannot be admitted, unless a passage in scripture could be produced in

*Bishop
Watson's
opinion*

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which it is clearly revealed, and I am sensible no such passage can be produced."—*Vide Charge to the Clergy of Landaff, June, 1795, by R. Watson, Lord Bishop of Landaff.*

Private
Baptism

In the ministration of private baptism, it is required that the child so baptized, if it live, be brought afterwards to the church, and after it hath been certified to the minister that it hath been properly baptized, and nothing essential omitted, the priest then is to say, "I certify to you that all hath been duly performed concerning the baptizing this child; who being born in original sin, and in the wrath of God, is now by the laver of regeneration in baptism received into the number of God's children." That the Bishop of Landaff should continue a member of the church of England after comparing the words just quoted, with this ceremony, is somewhat difficult to be explained, particularly when it is known that he is possessed of a large fortune independent of his preferment. It is remarkable, that in the ministration of the public baptism of infants, not one passage is produced from the scripture which authorizes the ceremony, as is usual in the other ceremonies of the church which are said to have a scriptural foundation.

The Church Catechism is the next part of

Catechism

the service which demands our notice, and the answer to the second question contains matter of sufficient importance for serious examination. To this question, "Who gave you that name," the child is instructed to answer, "My god-fathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Who can give us an assurance of all these things? and who that believes them, can have any wish, or feel any necessity to become virtuous, being already called to a divine inheritance of which he cannot be deprived. It may be answered, that this inheritance can only be claimed by those who lead a virtuous life; but the ninth article declares that *tho' there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess, that concupisence and lust have the nature of sin.* And the eleventh article asserts, that "we are accounted just before God, only for the merits of Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings." By the creed the child is taught to say that he believes in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and in the first commandment it is said, thou shalt have none other Gods but me, that is, the one God whom the Jews worship-

*The Creed,
at Variance
with the
first Commandment*

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*no allusion
to Trinity
in O.T.*

*Some of
the Ten
Command-
ments
inapplicable
to Christians*

ped ; for there is no mention of the Trinity, or three Gods in one, in the Old Testament. The child being questioned as to what he learns by the commandments, among other things, makes answer, "To honor and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters, to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters," of all this not one word is to be found in the ten commandments, either expressed or implied. It is also worthy of remark, that of these ten commandments given to the Jews, the second is by no means applicable to Christians, nor is the character which God gives of himself consistent with that of God under Christianity; neither do these commandments comprehend the whole of our duty as taught under that system. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholics violate the second commandment, by their frequent bowings and prostrations to the altar, and to their saints and images; neither are the Protestants wholly exempt from the charge of idolatry, since one of the canons enjoins, that "on going into the church, we should make *three bows* to the altar," which is generally much adorned with sculpture and painting. The fourth commandment, which relates to

the Sabbath, is totally inapplicable to the Christian religion, which allowed no distinction of days, and for which we have the authority of St Paul, *Rom. xiv.*, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth all days alike. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord doth he not regard it." Which clearly shews that the apostle paid no regard to one day more than to another—besides, the Jewish Sabbath was ordained as a day of rest, in commemoration of God's having rested from his work of the creation, and was on the seventh day of the week; we keep the Christian Sabbath, tho' no such day is commanded to be kept in the New Testament, on the first day of the week, in commemoration of Christ's resurrection—therefore it is a totally different celebration. St Paul tells us also repeatedly, that the ceremonial part of the law was wholly abolished by Christ. That the whole law is fulfilled when we love one another, *Gal. v.* verse 14. "Let no man judge you in respect of meat or drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ," *Col. ii.* verse 16. That is to say, "These things under the law of Moses were

*disagreeing
Jewish,
Christian
Sabbath*

ministration of the Lord's Supper, give such an arbitrary and inquisitorial power to ministers over their congregations, that they are now happily become a dead letter; the power is derived no doubt from the words of the scripture, but the circumstances of the early Christians are so inapplicable to modern times, that nothing but the most bigotted ignorance could have confounded the difference. The exhortation of the minister to such as intend to come to the Holy Communion, represents that ceremony in a light so different from the account that is given of it in scripture, as shews that our Liturgy requires to be still further purified from the great and gross errors of Popery. A simple valediction of Christ to his apostles, rendered more impressive under the form of a supper, and intended as a remembrance of his sufferings and affection for them, is both in the Popish and the Protestant Liturgy exalted into a divine mystery, and encompassed with all the terrors of hell and damnation. It is remarkable, that when the priest gives the bread and wine he does not say, "*This is a symbol, of the body, or the blood of Christ,*" but "*The body of our Lord Jesus Christ,*" and "*The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,*" so that the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the

*The
Communion
Service*

Bible Societies

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actual presence, is not quite rooted out of the Protestant communion, and so much holiness is yet attached to the simple elements, that the bread and wine which has been consecrated by the priest are forbidden to be carried out of the church, but the curate or minister, and the people are commanded, "reverently to eat the same." A remnant of superstition no doubt, tho' the Rubric says, that in order "to take away all occasion of dissension or superstition, the bread shall be such as is usually eaten," and yet it goes on to say, "it shall be the best and the purest wheat bread that can conveniently be gotten;" no doubt intended as a symbol of Christ's purity, and freedom from sin. It is, however, expressly declared, at the end of the service, that the bread and wine remain still in their natural substances, and therefore may not be adored.

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2 Sunday

the proper
day for it

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*the whole ceremony
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condly, a good dinner; and thirdly, for the sake of having children registered. After signing the child with the sign of the cross, the priest says, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy holy spirit, to receive it for thine own by adoption, and to incorporate it with thy holy church." Is it possible after this, that the same child should fall from the state of holiness, and become a servant of the devil; if so, where is the efficacy of baptism, or where is the power of the Lord against that of Satan and Sin? How lightly the matter of godfathers and godmothers is treated, may be seen from comparing the promises they make at the font, and the exhortation they receive from the minister, with their actual conduct, or rather their total neglect of the child after the solemn ceremony is performed. The compilers of the Prayer Book, fearful, no doubt, that the terrible doctrine which declares the damnation of infants dying unbaptized, should not be inferred or understood from the words of that service, declare that "By God's word it is certain, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, *are undoubtedly saved.*" Great then indeed must be the benefit of that cere-

mony, which can save innocent and helpless infants from eternal damnation; but credulous indeed, and dreadfully perverted must be that understanding, which can believe in a doctrine so repugnant to common sense, and to all our ideas of divine and human justice, as the damnation of unbaptized infants; and yet this is the doctrine of our church in the service of baptism, in the articles, and in the homilies—and this doctrine is to be inculcated on infant minds, and to be taught not only in England within the pale of the church, but is thought worthy to be disseminated thro' the whole of the civilized world, by the supporters of National Education. • Who can say that with such a doctrine remaining in her books, and avowed by her ministers, the English church requires no reformation? Rejoiced I am, however, to say, that there is one of her ministers, and a bishop too, who has boldly disavowed this doctrine in these energetic words: “A proposition which asserts that infants dying in the womb, or before baptism, (as the passage which his Lordship quotes from Fulgentius imports), will be tormented in everlasting fire, is so entirely subversive of all our natural notions of justice and mercy, that it cannot be admitted, unless a passage in scripture could be produced in

*Bishop
Watson's
opinion*

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which it is clearly revealed, and I am sensible no such passage can be produced."—*Vide Charge to the Clergy of Landaff, June, 1795, by R. Watson, Lord Bishop of Landaff.*

Private
Baptism

In the ministration of private baptism, it is required that the child so baptized, if it live, be brought afterwards to the church, and after it hath been certified to the minister that it hath been properly baptized, and nothing essential omitted, the priest then is to say, "I certify to you that all hath been duly performed concerning the baptizing this child; who being born in original sin, and in the wrath of God, is now by the laver of regeneration in baptism received into the number of God's children." That the Bishop of Landaff should continue a member of the church of England after comparing the words just quoted, with this ceremony, is somewhat difficult to be explained, particularly when it is known that he is possessed of a large fortune independent of his preferment. It is remarkable, that in the ministration of the public baptism of infants, not one passage is produced from the scripture which authorizes the ceremony, as is usual in the other ceremonies of the church which are said to have a scriptural foundation.

The Church Catechism is the next part of

Catechesis

the service which demands our notice, and the answer to the second question contains matter of sufficient importance for serious examination. To this question, "Who gave you that name," the child is instructed to answer, "My god-fathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Who can give us an assurance of all these things? and who that believes them, can have any wish, or feel any necessity to become virtuous, being already called to a divine inheritance of which he cannot be deprived. It may be answered, that this inheritance can only be claimed by those who lead a virtuous life; but the ninth article declares that *tho' there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess, that concupisence and lust have the nature of sin.* And the eleventh article asserts, that "we are accounted just before God, only for the merits of Jesus Christ, and not for our own works or deservings." By the creed the child is taught to say that he believes in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and in the first commandment it is said, thou shalt have none other Gods but me, that is, the one God whom the Jews worship-

*The Creed
at variance
with the
first Commandment*

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*no allusion
to a Trinity
in O.T.*

*Some of
the Ten
Commandments
inapplicable
to Christians*

ped ; for there is no mention of the Trinity, or three Gods in one, in the Old Testament. The child being questioned as to what he learns by the commandments, among other things, makes answer, " To honor and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters, to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters," of all this not one word is to be found in the ten commandments, either expressed or implied. It is also worthy of remark, that of these ten commandments given to the Jews, the second is by no means applicable to Christians, nor is the character which God gives of himself consistent with that of God under Christianity; neither do these commandments comprehend the whole of our duty as taught under that system. Nevertheless, the Roman Catholics violate the second commandment, by their frequent bowings and prostrations to the altar, and to their saints and images; neither are the Protestants wholly exempt from the charge of idolatry, since one of the canons enjoins, that " on going into the church, we should make *three bows* to the altar," which is generally much adorned with sculpture and painting. The fourth commandment, which relates to

the Sabbath, is totally inapplicable to the Christian religion, which allowed no distinction of days, and for which we have the authority of St Paul, *Rom. xiv.*, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth all days alike. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord doth he not regard it." Which clearly shews that the apostle paid no regard to one day more than to another—besides, the Jewish Sabbath was ordained as a day of rest, in commemoration of God's having rested from his work of the creation, and was on the seventh day of the week; we keep the Christian Sabbath, tho' no such day is commanded to be kept in the New Testament, on the first day of the week, in commemoration of Christ's resurrection—therefore it is a totally different celebration. St Paul tells us also repeatedly, that the ceremonial part of the law was wholly abolished by Christ. That the whole law is fulfilled when we love one another, *Gal. v. verse 14.* "Let no man judge you in respect of meat or drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ," *Col. ii. verse 16.* That is to say, "These things under the law of Moses were

*disagreeing
Jewish,
Christian
Sabbath*

types or figures of Christ, but now that Christ is come, they are no longer to be observed."

Gal. iv., St Paul in setting forth the difference between the law of Moses and that of Christ, expressly tells the converted Jews, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain, verse 10, 11, and he exhorts them, chap. v. verse 1, to get rid of all these ceremonial observances, "Stand fast therefore," says he, "in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."—For Christ's opinion of the Sabbath, *vide Mark* chap. ii. and iii. The child is next told to rehearse the Lord's prayer, not one word of which, if strictly examined, any child can understand, nor even a grown person, if he were called upon to affix a positive idea to the words, for the very first line would stagger him, were he compelled to explain it. When the child is required to say what he desires of God in this prayer, he repeats a number of things, of which the prayer takes no notice—particularly when he says, it desires God "to defend us from all dangers, ghostly and bodily." The use of the old word ghost, conveys to children very improper ideas, and frequently lays a foundation for those foolish and frightful notions which are hardly ever

Lord's
prayer

after rooted out ; for the child does not consider, and cannot understand that “ *ghostly* ” means spiritual ; and generally conceives it to be a prayer to defend him from ghosts. To this it may be said, by those who are so zealous to disseminate this ancient formulary of religion, that the expositions of the Catechism will remove this objection. To which I answer, that a Catechism, or summary of religion, which requires an expositor, no longer answers its intention, and I have found that these expositions, being generally ten times as long as the Catechism itself, only make it more difficult to be understood, and explain, according to the Latin phrase, *Ignotum per ignotius*.—“ An unknown thing by one more unknown.” The remainder of this sage compendium is employed in explaining the nature of the two Sacraments of our church, in a way which no child’s capacity can possibly comprehend, and in which there is one very objectionable passage, for it says, that “ The body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received in the Lord’s Supper.”

The ceremony of Confirmation seems intended to finish that which baptism had left incomplete, for children are therein called upon to promise *that* for themselves, which their

godfathers and godmothers had before promised in their name. Would it not be much better that every one should be left to years of discretion, before he takes upon himself the profession of a Christian? Undoubtedly it would, for in that case his Christianity would be the result of reason and conviction, whereas at present it is merely the force of an early impression formed before the period of reflection, and consequently more powerful than just; but this would not suit the priests, whose whole influence rests on these irrational impressions formed in our early youth.

Matrimony

The service of Matrimony, as performed in our church, has no countenance from scripture, and, therefore, ought not to be regarded as a religious institution; it is a natural union confirmed by a civil rite, but never was considered as a religious ceremony till priests became a distinct order in the church, and engrossed as much power as they possibly could, under pretence of religion; the rite is acknowledged both by Christ and his apostles, but none of them say how it is to be performed.-- It is a sacred and solemn union of infinite use in society, and, therefore, not lightly to be violated, but it is by no means an indissoluble bond, or as the Roman Catholics consider it,

a religious sacrament. The three reasons for the institution of matrimony are now generally omitted to be read by the priest, as not suited to the delicacy of modern females, tho' they were not thought improper to be read in times of ancient simplicity, when females were more virtuous, tho' less delicate. Most clergymen also more properly omit the prayer which calls matrimony "*a sacred mystery, in which is represented the spiritual union between Christ and his church,*" and declares that "*It is not lawful that it ever should be put asunder,*" because the first is ridiculous, and the second is contrary to the words of Jesus Christ, to the doctrine of the church, and to the practice of the House of Lords. In the same prayer it is also said, that God made man *after his own image and similitude*. If man is like God, then God must be like man, and thus we acquire a gross and ridiculous idea of a Deity in personal form and shape; and as such he is represented by the Roman Catholic church, in various paintings and sculptures, as an old man with a long beard. The direction at the end about receiving the sacrament the first time possible after matrimony, is seldom attended to.

The Visitation of the Sick is, in my opinion,

*Visitation
of the Sick*

the most objectionable part of the whole Prayer Book, because it gives a degree of power to the priest which no man ought to possess over another. The first passage that strikes me as particularly objectionable, is that which says, "There should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, trouble, and sickness." Reason and philosophy teach us to bear our sufferings with mildness and resignation, but a religion which attempts to make them a source of comfort to us, attempts to counteract and subdue the powers of nature, and make us ridiculous enthusiasts. The directions of the Rubric, which exhort the sick person to dispose of his worldly goods, and to declare his debts for the discharge of his conscience; to make a special confession of his sins to the priest, and the form which empowers the priest to acquit him of his sins, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are neither more nor less than Popery; and, therefore, I believe, are very seldom, if ever, attended to. The prayer in the Visitation of the Sick, beginning, "O most merciful God," intreats the Lord to renew in the sick man, "whatsoever hath been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by his

own carnal will and frailness;" a passage which is faulty as to grammar, in making the verb *decay* a verb passive, which is a verb neuter. A more serious error is that of ascribing to the personal operation of the Devil, that which is the effect of our own frail nature; for the Devil, properly speaking, is only our lusts and passions personified.

The Burial Service contains little that can be objected to as a form of words, if any form of words be requisite on committing a dead body to the ground, but that part of it which declares that the deceased, whether saint or sinner, is buried "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, thro' Jesus Christ," gave rise to the witty Epigram of Prior, on the funeral of the Duke of Buckingham, a man not celebrated for his chastity or piety.

The Office for Churching Women can do little good, and little harm, except when it takes a female too soon into a cold church, out of a warm house. The direction for the woman to offer accustomed offerings, is borrowed from the purifications of the Jewish law.

The Communion Service, as it is taken chiefly out of the Jewish Scriptures, is by no means suited to a Christian Liturgy, and indeed

Burial Service

Churching Women

Communion Service

Bible Societies

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is a scandal to any religion, particularly to Christians, who are expressly told by their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, "to bless, and curse not;" in short, nothing can be more ridiculous, nor more wicked, than after cursing sinners with all kind of curses, to invoke on ourselves all kind of blessings. The man that can coolly attend and repeat this service, must either not consider what he is about, or be the most cold-hearted, uncharitable wretch that God ever created, and possessed of a spirit totally remote from that of Christianity, which tells us, "Judge not that ye be not judged." In this ceremony also is expressed a pious wish that the Popish ceremony of penance may be revived. That wish has not yet been accomplished, and I should hope that it never may.

on
The Martyrdom
of Charles
I.
the Restoration
of Charles
II.

The stile of priestly adulation which pervades the whole of the service on the Martyrdom, as it is called, of Charles I. and the Thanksgiving for the Restoration of Charles II. is totally opposite to the free principles of the British Constitution, and ought for ever to be expunged from the Prayer Book. To say that nothing can expiate the blood of king Charles but the blood of Jesus Christ, is little short of blasphemy. To mention Charles II. among the number of "righteous

and religious kings whom God hath miraculously preserved," is an excess of servility hardly to be expected even from the well known disposition of the clergy to flatter the royal dispensers of preferment, and such prayers and thanksgivings, if early impressed on the minds of youth, must have a tendency to form them to obsequiousness and dissimulation. The doctrine of divine hereditary right to the crown, was solemnly abjured by the Parliament at the Revolution in 1688, and king William was placed on the throne by the choice of the people; for tho' the succession was preserved in Mary, yet William had no claim by *his blood* to the throne; the clergy, however, could not so soon forget their beloved doctrine of divine right, and, therefore, the prayers of the church were continued, in which William was substituted for Charles, and declared to have his authority from God, and the people to serve him, not for their own sake but for God's, "that he knowing whose minister he is, may above all things seek thy honor and glory; and that we and all his subjects duly considering whose authority he hath, may serve, honor, and humbly obey him, in thee, and for thee."

Having now gone thro' the whole of the Church of England Prayer Book, I put it to

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*an appeal
to Readers
upon the
whole
Liturgy.*

*on the
Controversies
on this
Subject.*

the sober judgment and conscience of every honest man, whether he thinks this service in all its parts, or even considering its general spirit, is worthy of extensive dissemination; and whether he who thinks otherwise, is justified in contributing to the extraordinary measures which are now using to put it in the hands of all ranks and stations; if not, let him consider whether some more rational and less objectionable formulary should not be substituted in its room, or whether after the general principles of instruction are extensively diffused, men may not be left to themselves in selecting such books of religion and morality, as are likely to impress them with notions more pure and undefiled. Having said thus much on the pretensions of the Bible and the Prayer Book to be generally circulated, I cannot altogether forbear making a few remarks on the controversies which the societies for their dissemination have occasioned; and I am sorry to be compelled to say, that the spirit with which they have been conducted, proves that Christianity has not succeeded in mitigating the violent passions of *all* its professors, but that even Churchmen continue to be actuated in mere matters of opinion by a spirit of bigotry and persecution, which shews that they have

the will, if they had the power, to silence their opponents by much stronger arguments than pen and ink can convey. Christ himself told us that he came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword; and his words have been most strictly fulfilled. We have reason, however, to thank the spirit of philosophy, that Christians have not the same power to persecute each other which they had two hundred years ago. Dr. Marsh, who takes the lead in the controversy about Bibles and Prayer Books, is a true Churchman, and as a Churchman I must say he has the better side of the argument with the Editor of the British Review; for how any man who professes to be attached to the Church and the Liturgy can object to the latter being disseminated with the Bible, or defend the omission of it, I am at a loss to determine; I only lament the acrimonious spirit with which Dr. Marsh treats his opponents, and I cannot but allow that they are undermining the Establishment, notwithstanding all their plausible arguments to the contrary; for who that pretends to respect the Liturgy as an orthodox manual of divinity, can suffer the Bible to be put into the hands of all people indiscriminately, without such a guide to their understanding? Not those, surely, who think that the Bible is a book capable of being variously interpreted according to each man's

*Bishop
Marsh's
writing*

Bible Societies

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*That the
Bible should
be read
without any
pre-disposition
to particular
doctrines.*

faucy or early impressions: orthodox churchmen, therefore, must undoubtedly wish, and should earnestly strive, that the Prayer Book and the Homilies should always accompany it, as the best interpretation of it, and as tending to keep down the growth of heresy and schism; for they who are allowed to read the Bible by itself will form their own opinions of it. For my part, I rejoice that so many Bibles have been distributed without any such orthodox companions, because I believe if the Bible can be read impartially, and without any pre-conceived notions, the morality it contains will find its way to the uncorrupted understandings of all men, while its doctrines will be left only to puzzle divines; and its monstrous improbabilities are so revolting to human reason, that they could never be received by it without previous training and instruction. Let the Bible therefore be disseminated as widely as possible, without gloss or comment, and even if it sometimes does harm, it will do much good—for there is no book extant, of its size, which contains more entertaining history, nor more useful morality; but never let it be forced upon any description of people, let all nations have the means of reading it if they will, but let no undue means be used to put it in the hands of those who have no wish for it. The English nation is the most combustible,

the most easily set on fire of any nation upon earth; and as a proof of this, it is truly ridiculous to see the prevalence of fashion in the rapid increase of Bible Societies. I am far from wishing to discountenance or ridicule the perusal of the Bible, for when read without any religious bias, it cannot fail to be useful: but to see men of all ranks and descriptions, of the most opposite habits, sentiments, and persuasions, uniting to cram the Bible down the throats of all nations, people, and languages, with indiscriminating violence; to see men the most profligate in their private conduct, the most open despisers of religion in their lives and conversations, men who have never read one word of the Bible since they were at school, and hardly know what it contains,—to see all these men, and women too, hurrying to subscribe to what in their hearts they care not one farthing about, is just as ridiculous as to see them crowding to a ball or a masquerade.

*on the
members
of Bible
Societies*

By those who are unwisely sanguine as to the improvement of human nature, the Lancasterian System of Education is held up as the *panacea* or universal remedy for all the evils of society; and we are very confidently told, both by Christians and Philosophers, that when all men are taught to read and write, there will be no more crimes, no more vice, no more misery in the world.—

Education

*the poor
promises
than it will
probably
perform*

Bible Societies

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Believing as I firmly do, that these things are inherent in the system, as correctives of the great original defect, I am not so earnest in my hopes of general melioration, or sanguine as many of my friends, in believing that we have arrived at the commencement of a new *era*; for I do believe, that even after all men, women and children are taught to read and write, there will still be much vice and misery in the world—nevertheless, I will cheerfully contribute my mite towards the expense of educating the children of the poor, and my opinion as to further improvement in educating the rich, for all the vices of society are not to be found in the lower ranks.

*Bell's &
Lancaster's
Claims &
Merits compared*

*The
Invention
due to Bell;
-propagation,
& Lancaster:*

The different merits of the two Schools of Bell and Lancaster, though they have occasioned much controversy, and wasted much paper, require no very long discussion:—as to their separate claims to originality, those may be also very soon settled; for neither of them is original, if we regard the first rudiments of the invention, though Bell reduced them to a system before Lancaster, who had conceived the idea before he had heard of Bell, and then improved and extended what he found (by his own acknowledgement) to have been practised before he opened his first school. Though the claim of priority as to time is allowed to Dr. Bell, no impartial person, I think, can doubt that

the merit of propagating the System is due to Lancaster; for till his improvements had been long practised, and began to excite the alarm of the Established Church, even Dr. Bell himself had not troubled his head about his own System. In such a controversy it is a great matter to lay hold of a few facts, and this I trust is one which cannot be controverted. The ignorance of Dr. Bell in claiming for himself the merit of complete originality, has been fully proved by the very learned Mr. Ensor, in his National Education; and I rejoice at any time to see ignorance, when combined with presumption, exposed to contempt.—

*Mr. Ensor's
work
referred to*

“ Were these documents and facts suppressed, it is not impossible to conceive that at some future period, a question might arise in regard to the origin of this System of Tuition, by which one master may teach a thousand or more scholars, that it may fare with this discovery as it has fared with many other discoveries, and that future and foreign writers may arise and claim to themselves, what did not originate with them.” *Vide Bell's Elements of Tuition*, p. 127. Mr. Ensor has quoted from Bentham's *Traité de Legislation*, an account of a school at Paris, established by the Chevalier Paulet many years before the Revolution, in which the boys were employed mutually to instruct each other, and were governed also by themselves, the

*Bentham's
Traité de
Legislation*

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younger boys being placed under the inspection of the older.

on the meaning of Xenophon's γεραιότεροι Xenophon also mentions something of the same kind, but not in the passage quoted by Mr. En-
sor, *de Inst. Cyri*, for the word γεραιότεροι in that passage does not mean *the older boys*, but *the old men*, as will be seen by a reference to the preceding sentence; but Xenophon in his account of the Republic of Sparta says, "That when no full grown man was present, that the boys might not be without a ruler, Lycurgus placed the cleverest boy in every class to take care of the others."—*Vide Xenoph. de Repub. Laced. cap. 2. 12. Ed. Zeunii.* No doubt the first rudiments of that system which Dr. Bell and Lancaster simultaneously extended, are to be found in this passage of Xenophon, in Paulet's institution at Paris, and in every great school that ever existed; but they have each the merit of having reduced to a System that which before lay scattered in its rude and hidden elements. Now with regard to the separate merits of their different schemes, I must say I prefer Bell's for its simplicity, and Lancaster's for its cheapness, though I detest the multitude of degrading, cruel, and ridiculous punishments with which it is debased; and I doubt that in both, the method of making boys masters will make them tyrannical, arbitrary, and oppressive. Dr. Bell's,

as being exclusively devoted to the Establishment (as if children were never to read any thing but prayer books and religious tracts), I dislike for its narrow-minded principle, and also for the doubts which he has expressed whether the children of the poor ought to learn writing and arithmetic ; because there is not any situation in life, even that of the poorest labourer, where these may not be of use, nay, are not positively requisite. I regret that a man of such extensive learning and liberal principles as Mr. Ensor, should have degraded himself by the asperity with which he speaks of Dr. Bell, and the unjust partiality he every where shows to Lancaster ; for Lancaster, though his system has the merit of teaching no sectarian principles of religion, has shown much vanity and conceit in puffing himself and his school, and is by no means free from that spiritual pride which Christ has so strongly censured and forbidden ; he is however on the whole one of those extraordinary beings, who now and then arise to give a fresh impulse and direction to the minds of men. The opposition which this system has experienced from the bigoted and interested members of the Establishment, affords a fresh proof if any were wanting to demonstrate the evils of these institutions, which like corporations in the infancy of trade, though they might origi-

*Ensor's
illiberality
to Dr. Bell*

Homilies

*The controversy
between
Dr. Maltby, &
Mr. Cunningham;
(vide Brit. Rev.
No 7)*

the circulation of that which they were intended to preserve and extend. To revive the Book of Homilies must if there is any such thing as common to the people of England; for though once be considered as containing sound and wholesome instruction, yet they can be considered as being for the most part illegible, and wholly superseded by the sermons, which were in former times very common. To those who, like myself, consider it as a mere human composition, containing wisdom and much folly, the eighth and seventh Number of the British Review afford a very considerable treat; it gives an account of two pamphlets written by two men of the established church, one of whom believes only so much of the Bible as he is consistent with his reason, and the other believes all. These pamphlets give us a melancholy view on the one hand of a sacrifice of common sense to religion, and on the other of reason to religion.

he believes it liable to be so abused. Mr. Cunningham insists that all men have a right to read the divine word, because all are promised the assistance of the spirit to understand its spiritual meaning. Of these two divines I have little hesitation in saying which is the most reasonable, and still less in saying which is most honest.

According to Dr. Maltby, the use of an Established Church consists in expounding those passages of the Bible which it requires the aid of human learning and good sense to understand. According to his opponent, there can be no use for any church at all; because, if the aid of the spirit is vouchsafed to all those who sincerely ask it, the Bible may be *spiritually* understood,—therefore a cobbler may be as good a teacher as a doctor of divinity. Mr. Cunningham boasts, that by the revival of this doctrine, “our churches again begin to be filled, and the people return to their allegiance.” If so, it is only a further proof of the ignorant and irrational state of the people, when they will listen to none but those who preach to them what they cannot understand; for what man can reconcile to his reason the doctrines of the Incarnation, the Satisfaction of the Cross, the Mediatorial Intercession, the Influence of the Spirit, and the Eternity of future punishment? all which are to be found in St. Paul’s epistles,

Cunningham's opinion

whether the Learning, spiritual, and human is best in the Scriptures

Infidel Societies

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*Dr. Maltby
w^d exclude
the vulgar
from the
Epistles*

*The Church's
& the dissenter's
opinions
contrasted.*

and consequently are taught by the church of England. Dr. Maltby more wisely, but I will not say more honestly, would exclude common people from all access to the greater part of the epistles, asserting that they contain "*many things hard to be understood,*" and many things not applicable to Christians of the present times.—In this attempt (I will not say a laudable one) to make the Christian religion more reasonable, Dr. Maltby can never succeed with those who believe in the divine origin of Christianity; it is impossible to cut and carve it so as to please all palates; it must either be wholly received, or wholly rejected, as a divine revelation; this miserable compromise between reason and interest, can neither make the religion nor its ministers respectable, and those men who attempt it, only show what they would do, if they were not afraid of resigning their livings. Dr. Maltby has shown us that an Establishment is requisite to make Christianity seem what it is not, a rational system of belief; and Mr. Cunningham has shown us that there is no such necessity, inasmuch as Christianity cannot be comprehended merely by human reason but requires the aid of inspiration. Dr. Maltby seems to place the whole merit of Christianity in its moral precepts, and uses the name of God very sparingly; Mr. Cunningham says, that moral pre

cepts are nothing without doctrines, and talks of God as familiarly as if he were a man like himself. It is in truth almost incredible, that any man should be found in this enlightened age, who believes that the Deity exists in a human form, and once descended on the earth ; yet Mr. C. tells us, that Christianity displays "*God himself employed in the duties of man,*" and "that God has marked his abhorrence of an attempt to separate the study of divine books, by the errors resulting from this separation." It is utterly impossible to defend Christianity, as a divine revelation, against the daily advancing reason of mankind ; and, therefore, its advocates would be wise in defending no more of it than is fairly defensible. Let them maintain that it contains many good and useful precepts, conveyed both singly and in parables ; that it is capable of doing much good to mankind when divested of its divine pretensions ; and let them allow that these pretensions have been the cause of the principal evils it has occasioned.

*Christianity,
as revealed
cannot be
the test
reason*

Hartford, near Morpeth, Oct. 3d, 1813.

*Completed the pen-
of this work Sept 1816
E. S. R.*

*on the very day on which, Mr & Mrs Burdon
left Sandhurst for Paris*



NOTES

TO

MATERIALS FOR THINKING.

THE STATE OF SOCIETY.

P. 1. "*The life of man is.*" The wretchedness of man is a subject of lamentation to be found in almost all the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew writers.—The whole may be summed up in a line and a half of Mimnermus :

οὐδε τις ἐστὶν

Ἀνθρώπων, ὦ Ζεὺς, μὴ κακὰ πολλὰ διδῷ.

The Thracians used to lament over those who were born, and to rejoice when they died.

Vide Herod. and Anthol. Ed. Bosch, vol. 1. p. 54.

No one has more pathetically lamented the shortness and misery of human life than Sophocles in that beautiful chorus to the *Œdipus Coloneus*, which begins

Ὅστις τοῦ πλεονος μερὸς

Χρηζει.

lin. 1275.

The same idea also in the *Trachiniæ* :

ἀναλγητὰ γὰρ οὐ

δ' ὁ πάντων κραινῶν βασιλεὺς

Ἐπέβαλε θνατοῖς Κρονίδαρ.

l. 128. p. 502. Ed. Vauvilliers.

It was an opinion common among the ancients of all nations, that the gods were jealous of human happiness, and thus they account for the misery of man.—It is at least a strong proof of the fact, though a bad account of the cause.

Vide Herod. lib. 7. c. 46. Aristoph. Plut. l. 879. 3 Ed.

Brunchii Oxon. Vell. Paterc. p. 15. Ed. Delph.

2 P. 2. "*A radical defect in the system.*" For what purposes the world was formed as it is, I leave to those who are "hand in glove with Providence" to find out; I pretend not to dive into mysteries; and to me at least they are not revealed.

3 P. 2. "*The disproportion.*" The evidence of this fact rests on the authority of Mr. Malthus, who, in his *Essay on Population*, has laid it down as the foundation of all his subsequent reasoning upon the subject, and proved it by various details from ancient and modern history, and the present state of the world; I recommend his book to every man who wishes for full and complete information on so important a topic. Though there have been many attempts to overturn his system, none have yet succeeded, for it is founded on facts; and they who deny that the principle of population can ever produce the effect he has stated, till the world is completely full, must have omitted to read his details, which prove, that every country is to be considered as a world of itself; for in every country there is a constant struggle between population and the means of subsistence. Whether Mr. Malthus saw the full extent to which his doctrine was capable of being pushed, is not for me to determine, nor for him as a clergyman to avow—he employed it only for the uses of political œconomy, I have attempted to extend it to a philosophical research, as it seems capable of accounting for the origin of evil; (a mystery which has

been hitherto hidden both from divines and philosophers;) and to me it affords an easy solution of every difficulty in the moral government of the world, for which few men have hitherto ventured to account, and no man in the method now mentioned.

P. 4. "*To shorten.*" The period to which most men's lives are capable of being extended seems not to be less than a hundred years, were they not shortened by their own imprudence and the villany of others; for, besides those who die by intemperance, thousands have their existence abridged by the adulteration of what they eat and drink; for such has ever been the general laxness of morality, that few men consider the injury they do to others, provided they can make money by it themselves, and never scruple to adulterate all that can be adulterated, with ingredients neither wholesome nor innocent. David and Solon have fixed the term of human life at seventy years. *Vide Psalms, and Herodotus, lib. 1. cap. 82.* According to the bills of mortality in England, of those who live above two years, more die between forty and fifty than at any other period.

P. 5. "*Happiness.*" A book has lately been published, in which it is maintained with a singular affectation of paradox, that happiness neither is nor ought to be the object of human pursuit, and that knowledge is the only thing to be desired. I will give the author's meaning in his own words: "It appears to me, then, that the great object which the human race ought to pursue, and the attainment of which they ought to regard as the business of their lives, is not to produce happiness, pleasure, or felicity in themselves or others; but that, on the contrary, the end for which they were formed, and which alone they can pursue with success, is the improvement of their whole intellectual faculties, whether speculative or active. In one word, it is

the business of man in this world to become an excellent being, possessing high powers of energy and intelligence. This is his chief good, and ought to be the great and ultimate object of his pursuit, to which every other consideration should be sacrificed."

Vide Forsyth's Principles of Moral Science, vol. i. p. 9.

It seems to me that this author confounds the means with the end ; for though men admire knowledge, and give praise to activity and energy of mind, yet it is only because they consider these things as conducive to happiness, or the means of gaining the object of their pursuit ; and though it certainly happens that all men fall short of the goal at which they arrive, it by no means follows that they ought not to desire it, or that their minds and faculties are not so formed as to make it constantly their aim.

Livii Hist. lib. 5. c. 21.

P. 9. "*The state of the world.*" To all general rules there must be exceptions, because no two men can ever be placed in the same circumstances : when they are nearly the same, the same rules may be adhered to ; when they differ widely, the general rule must be abandoned, and men permitted to act according to the exigency of the case ; under this restriction, that it must be with an evidently good design, that is to say, that the good they do by violating the rule will outweigh the bad, or rather obviate the evil that would have attended its observance.

P. 12. "*Mutability.*" It is from hence that we must look for the principle upon which is founded the love of antiquity. Whatever has remained for a great length of time in the same state, seems to have been exempted from that sweeping devastation which carries off in the course of years all the works of Art and Nature : those things which have for the greatest length of time resisted that torrent,

become rare and wonderful ; if they are also beautiful, they have a further claim on our admiration.

P. 12. "*The constant tendency.*" Considering the principle and effects of population, there is little reason to rejoice at the boasted discovery of the cow-pox ; for as it is evident that a certain number of people in every country, in proportion to the population, must die in a given space of time, it is a matter of little consequence whether they die by the small-pox or the scarlet-fever, for the cow-pox can only preserve them from one kind of infection, and perhaps may render them susceptible of others more loathsome and extensive.—Population, when too crowded, will force its way out, and the cow-pox can no more prevent that, than it can prevent fire from burning, water from finding its level, or the wicked from being unhappy. A more serious charge against it is, that of having introduced certain scurfy eruptions on the heads of children, which were before totally unknown.

P. 13. "*Nature will ever.*"

Ἡ φύσις πάσης τέχνης
 Ἀρχηγόνον ἐστ', ἀρχηγόνον ὡ ἀκίτηρις
 Οὐκ ἐστὶν οὐδὲν τοῦ πονεῖν σοφωτέρον.

Athen. l. 3. Ed. Schweigh.

P. 14. "*Enormous property.*" Though immense property in few hands, is adverse both to population and happiness, yet the contrary extreme has also its disadvantages ; nature in every thing loves the medium—it is the *ne plus ultra* of enjoyment. Arthur Young, at a time when he could not be suspected of any thing hostile to general liberty and happiness, has shown the evil tendency of too small properties, both as affecting population and comfort.

Vide Travels in France, vol. ii. p. 406.

P. 14. "*The only just and practicable method.*" Though it is impossible, in a free state, to define the precise limit for the increase of property, yet it is right to lay as many checks as possible on posthumous accumulation; and where individuals devise their property seemingly for no other purpose, it is right that the law should interfere upon a principal of natural equity, and prevent any man from doing an evil beyond his life, which Nature has also prevented. Large estates possessed by men who never see them, are certainly an evil of the greatest magnitude; not only from the oppression they create, but because such estates are never half cultivated. I recommend to my readers the perusal of Mr. Hargrave's *Argument on the Will of Mr. Thellusson*.—It is copious, elegant, and forcible.

P. 15. "*To destroy.*" Daines Barrington, in his *Remarks on the more antient Statutes*, a book in which the dry antiquarian prevails over the philosopher, has some severe strictures on the iniquity of this custom: "Younger children," says he, "are not in this country exposed as they were among the Greeks and Romans: but the very scanty provision made for them in comparison with the eldest son, seems to approach nearly to this barbarity."

P. 18. "*Laws and regulations.*" Among many burdens which are imposed on the lower ranks of society by the authority of the great, none is more oppressive than that of quartering soldiers upon publicans*, many of whom are hardly able to gain a living; and on this account the erection of barracks may be defended, as removing a severe

* Vide Debates on the quartering of soldiers upon publicans.—The speeches of General Wade and Mr. Pulteney. *Cobbett's Parliamentary Register*, vol. xi.

grievance from a numerous and industrious body of men : but the military establishment would be much improved if the soldier and the citizen were never separated—the volunteer system has proved how far they are capable of being united. Another very burdensome service is imposed on the lower ranks of the people, for which they are by no means sufficiently indemnified, I mean in executing the office of constable ; for while the great enjoy their enormous wealth undisturbed, a poor man is called from the laborious employment by which he gains a maintenance, to protect the peace and property of others, and is neither sufficiently rewarded for the risk of his person nor the loss of his time ; a sum at least adequate to his loss and trouble ought to be allowed, which I believe very seldom happens. The duty of 8*l.* for a hawker or pedlar travelling with a horse, is a severe tax on honest industry, though said to be for the protection of regular traders ; but there can certainly be no good reason given why one man should not be allowed to exercise his trade by going round the country, as well as another who is stationary, if his goods are obtained honestly. Another great grievance of the lower ranks is that of not being allowed to keep a horse for any other purpose than that of their immediate occupation ; so that a miller, a butcher, or a baker, cannot use his horse to visit a friend at a distance, nor in many cases of the most urgent necessity, without having it taxed to the same amount as that of a horse kept solely for pleasure. Another severe hardship to which the poor are compelled to submit, is the low rate of wages in many trades and employments, because they are forbidden, under pain of heavy punishments, to confer with each other on the means of redress, even moderately, soberly, and peaceably. These are a few of the grievances imposed on the lower ranks by the legislative power of their

superiors: the list might be much lengthened, but every man's knowledge of the state of society will enable him to supply the remainder.

14 P. 23. "*To the remains.*" My reader is referred for a full developement of this system to Gilbert Stuart's *View of the Progress of Society in Europe*, and to Montesquieu's *Esprit de Loix*, lib. 30, 31.

15 P. 24. "*The servile.*" The aristocratical spirit extends itself to the remotest branches of the independent gentry, and even they whose fortunes have been formed by trade, forget their origin, and assume the airs of high birth. The little aristocracy of a country town is often truly ludicrous; they give themselves as many airs as if they were descended from John of Ghent.

16 P. 28. "*Corrupted.*" The Comedies of Aristophanes are a proof of the grossness which arises from the separation of the sexes in society; the delicate indecency of the *Pucelle d'Orleans* is the fruit of their licentious intercourse, the different shades of which are to be found in the *Decameron* of Boccacio and the plays of Shakspeare. A state of comparative refinement alone could have produced the epistle of Eloisa to Abelard, but a true respect for female modesty forbids even indecent allusions in the presence of women.

P. 36. "*The laity.*" The *Free Thinking Christian's Magazine*, which is published for the express purpose of putting an end to that distinction and restoring genuine Christianity, forms an æra in the History of Toleration. In the year 1793 the idea first struck me; I mentioned it, through my valued friend John Tweddell, to Dr. Parr; he ridiculed the notion, and requested me to desist from prosecuting the inquiry.

Vide Free Thinking Magazine, vol. i. p. 262.

P. 36. "*Atheism.*" As a proof of the increased liberality of mankind, I need only cite a few instances of the persecution of Atheists in former times. The Athenians sought to try Diagoras the Melian for Atheism, but he fled from Athens, and a price was set upon his head.—*Diod. Sic. lib. 13. cap. 6.* Protagoras was banished from Athens, and his books burnt, because he ventured to assert that he knew nothing about the gods, whether there were gods, or whether there were none.—*Vide Cicero de Nat. Deorum*, a curious Treatise, which shows, that almost all the heathen philosophers considered God and the universe as the same thing. Doletus was burnt at Paris 1546 for Atheism; Vanini was burnt at Paris 1621; and Bayle fled to Holland 1681; Casimir Lisinski was executed at Grodno 1689; and Akenhead at Edinburgh 1697; and the body of David Hume, in 1775, was obliged to be watched many nights by his friends, lest it should be taken up by the fanatics; who considered one of the most amiable men that ever existed, as a monster of iniquity, because he did not believe what they believed.—Hence we see that all religions are intolerant, even Deism cannot be excepted.

P. 37. "*Ancient.*" Solomon in his Ecclesiastes, chapter ix. ver. 11. is a strong acknowledgement of the power of necessity.

P. 37. "*Moderns.*" Montaigne and Charron, among the French, and Wollaston in his Religion of Nature, have shown themselves somewhat superior to vulgar opinions; the latter is one of the most enlightened of Christian philosophers, and had he dared to shake off Christianity, would have been an Atheist. The doctrine of Necessity he was by no means a stranger to; for he says, "that though man is a free agent, he may not be free as to every thing: his

freedom may be restrained, and be only accountable for those acts in respect of which he is free," p. 107. "God," he says, "exists by necessity, he cannot but be," p. 68. I recommend the whole of his Treatise to every candid and dispassionate Christian. It says all that can be said to prove the existence of a Deity, and it shows how little that tends to satisfy our reason.

P. 39. "*The ill treatment.*" The laws of England afford little protection to household servants against the tyranny and injustice of their masters; for it is in every man's power to dismiss his servant, without paying his wages, whenever he pleases, either from caprice or villany, and the servant has no means of redress but by the tedious and expensive process of a law-suit. In many other instances such servants are too much in the power of their masters; those in trade or husbandry have an easier and cheaper remedy when they are oppressed.

P. 43. "*Like passions.*" A Grecian philosopher says, "We should consider our servants as unfortunate friends."

P. 49. "*Insufficient wages.*" The late James Boswell, a worthy but a weak man, in the first volume of his Life of Johnson tells us, that he once put a question to the great philosopher which he was unable to resolve, nor had he ever found any man who could. The question, which any child might have answered, was, "Why women servants, who work harder than men, and have to find their own clothes into the bargain, have less wages." The answer is obvious—"Because women do not hold their proper rank in society." Mary Wollstonecraft would have answered him in a moment. p. 339. edit. 4to.

P. 53. "*A state of nature.*" The influence which these dreams of benevolence had in bringing about the French

revolution seems now to be on the decline, and men begin to be convinced that society, with all its evils, is much to be preferred to that solitary, unsocial state, which some romantic minds had imagined. Raynal, one of the most ardent patrons of the sect, lived to see his own ideas burlesqued, and retracted some of his benevolent errors as the only atonement he could make to society for the mischiefs which his notions had occasioned.

P. 54. "*Nation robbing nation.*" There are three kinds of robbing, viz. robbing by law, by force, and by fraud:—of all that is taken from us by government, beyond what is requisite for its maintenance and support, we are robbed by law; robbing by force is that which is committed by individuals, and therefore punished by law. Some frauds are punishable, and punished by law, and many are not.

6 P. 54. "*Consideration.*" I have suffered, like Prometheus, for doing good to others; and of me also it may be said,

Τοιαυτ' ἀπηυρώ του φιλανθρώπου τροπού.

Æsch. Prometh. l. 27.

P. 56. "*Contemptuously called the mob.*" To civilize the mob may appear to some a hopeless, and to others a ridiculous attempt; yet who that considers the progressive nature of human improvement will venture to say that it is impossible? We hear of countries where no such degrading distinction exists, at least where the lower ranks are enlightened, virtuous, and polished. The Account of the Embassy to Ava, contains many proofs, that a distinction of ranks is thoroughly compatible with the improvement of the vulgar, and that the reason which is common to all, is in all capable of being cultivated. "Their laws are wise, (meaning the Birman,) and pregnant with sound morality;

their police is better regulated than in most European countries; their natural disposition is friendly, and hospitable to strangers; and their manners rather expressive of manly candour than courteous dissimulation; the gradations of rank, and the respect due to station, are maintained with a scrupulosity that never relaxes. A knowledge of letters is so widely diffused, that there are no mechanics, few of the peasantry, or even the common watermen (usually the most illiterate class) who cannot write and read in the vulgar tongue." *Symes's Embassy to Ava.*

"It was a spectacle not less pleasing than novel to Europeans to witness such a concourse of people, of all classes, brought together for the purposes of hilarity and sport, without their committing any one act of intemperance, or being disgraced by a single instance of intoxication." Blush, Britons, at the relation, and learn decency from a people whom you reckon uncivilized! The author proceeds: "What scenes of riot and debauchery would not a similar festival in the vicinity of any capital town of Great Britain inevitably produce!" The reflection is humiliating to an Englishman, however proud he may feel of the national character. *Ditto*, vol. ii. p. 35.—"Free from restraint among themselves, the Birmans scruple not to go into your house without ceremony, although an utter stranger. They do not attempt to open a door, and where a curtain dropped, denotes privacy, they never offer to violate the barrier." Vol. ii. p. 37.—"In all my excursions I never once experienced insult or molestation: curiosity and astonishment were often expressed, but unaccompanied by personal incivility, or the slightest indication of contempt." Vol. ii. p. 51.—"All kioums, or monasteries, whether in town or country, are seminaries for the education of youth, in which

boys of a certain age are taught their letters, and instructed in moral and religious duties. To these schools the neighbouring villagers send their children, where they are educated gratis; no distinction between the son of a peasant and him who wears the tsalve, or mark of nobility." Vol. ii. p. 81. "Houses in cities or villages differ very little." Vol. ii. p. 165. The striking difference between the pompous residences of the rich, and the mud walls of the peasant in Great Britain and Ireland, is shocking to humanity.—"There are capacious granaries belonging to the king, which are always kept filled with grain, ready to be transported to any part of the empire in which there happens a scarcity: this wise and humane institution strongly evinces the solicitude of the monarch for the welfare of his people." Vol. ii. p. 166.—"An English officer, dressed in uniform, was a phænomenon perhaps never before seen in this part of the world. Whichever way I turned, they respectfully opened, and the most forward were restrained by others. Had I entered a house, I have no doubt of the owners offering me the best it contained. Kindness to strangers is equally the precept and the custom of the Birmans." Vide p. 180. The subordination of rank is maintained by the Birmans with the most tenacious strictness. Vol. ii. p. 189.

These extracts ought to convince us, that inequality of rank and general civilization are thoroughly compatible, if it were not evident from the nature of things that "To whomsoever nature hath given the exercise of reason, she hath given the means of becoming a moral agent."—*Drummond's Review of the Government of Sparta and Athens*, p. 69.

P. 56. "There are some honest men."

Ω φίλοι ουκ ἀγα πάντες υπερβίοι ἀνδρες εσσιτ,
Ουδ' ευεργεσίας ἀμνημονες.

Apoll. Rhod. 2.

The whole of this interesting story of Phineus and Parion is told with that lively and pathetic simplicity which so much distinguish this beautifully narrative poet. He excels in description, but to the name of an epic poet he has no claim.

P. 57. "In friendly circles." The distinction of ranks in society is perhaps more strictly preserved in England than in any other country, for no where are people so nice in choosing their company; this is certainly illiberal, and a great obstacle to that general diffusion of knowledge and improvement which arises from the interchange of ideas among men of different ranks in society. The state of conversation in Russia is by no means refined, yet no obstacle to its improvement arises from the separation of ranks; for Storch, in his animated Picture of Petersburg, tells us, that "one peculiar advantage is the mixture of all ranks and countries, of all religious denominations, and the most different manners, habits, and humours. The first great benefit arising from this amalgamation of mankind is a mutual toleration. Riches are here no recommendation; if a certain ease of deportment is not wanting, and a man discover no marks of poverty that offend the common rules of decorum, it is all that is required." I recommend the whole chapter on the state of society in Russia to be read attentively.

30 P. 64. "Fashion." Seneca has given a lively picture of Roman dissipation, in the article of late hours:—"It is

an alarming symptom of national decline, when luxury has so far overcome nature, as to sacrifice health to fashion." *Seneca Epist.* 122. *Ed. Paris*, 1607.

P. 68. "*A dinner party.*" In his Symposium, Plutarch has a dialogue concerning those who invite great parties to dinner: the whole of it tends to show the folly of the custom; but one passage deserves particularly to be quoted. *Λογὸν δὲ κοινωνίαν ἀναιροῦσιν οἱ πολλοὺς εἰς τὰ τοῦτο συμφοροῦντες, μᾶλλον δὲ ολίγους ποιοῦσιν ἀλλήλοις συνειναι.*

P. 75. "*Hundreds of our fair countrywomen.*" Dr. Beddoes has borne testimony to the numbers who yearly die of consumption from the want of warm clothing: the poor are to be pitied for their wants, but the fools of fashion deserve to suffer for their vanity.—*Beddoes on Consumption, article Dress*, &c. The newspapers afford almost daily proof of some unfortunate female who has lost her life by fire, from the lightness of her dress; the silks and satins of our grandmothers afforded a preservative against this destructive element.

P. 80. "*Savage ignorance.*"

"Ignorance is the curse of God;

Knowledge, the wing wherewith we fly to heaven."

Second Part of Henry VI.

P. 88. "*Tempting Providence.*" A curious remark to this effect is to be found in the 2d volume of Harris's *Voyages*, chap. vii. "A servant of Sir Thomas Rowe's went out one morning and got himself married, though he had three wives already. This may be called drawing bills upon Providence without a sufficient warrant for their payment."

90. "*Pope and Dryden.*" I will not deny that there is much genius in Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Keats; but till they have learnt to polish and correct their first effu-

sions, I will not recommend them as models of taste to the rising generation, nor compare the conceited singularities of the two first to the vigorous simplicity of Pope and Dryden. Mr. Wordsworth is a poet only when he forgets his own system; for I cannot consent to call that poetry, which has nothing to distinguish it from prose but rhythm.

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P. 90. "*Cheap and simple pleasures.*" The great change in dress, which has also had a considerable effect in producing a change of manners, was first introduced by the unfortunate Marie Antoinette of France, who thoughtlessly descended from her elevated rank to gratify her passion for variety, and by thus contributing to bring the royal authority into contempt, prepared the way for that sweeping revolution, which hurried along in its rapid course the good and the bad of all old institutions together. Soularie, in his interesting but tedious *Memoirs of Louis XVI.* relates that "she was accused of having caused a revolution of dress and fashion in France, to the advantage of the linen manufactories in the Low Countries, which her brother was interested to revive. It is true, that our silks were no longer in use after the queen had borrowed from her chambermaids the custom of dressing in white. Brussels grew rich, and Lyons lost three-fourths of her population and commerce." Diodorus Siculus relates that Menes, the first mortal monarch of Egypt, introduced a great degree of luxury, both in dress and diet; his successor, Trephactus, being reduced to great necessity in his war against Arabia, lived one whole day on the vilest food, and being no worse for it, he uttered a heavy imprecation against the man who first introduced luxury; and even inscribed it on a pillar in the temple of Jupiter at Thebes—lib. i. cap. 145. To a mind rightly constituted there is a real luxury in the sim-

plest gifts of nature, and a fine day is a sensual enjoyment.

P. 107. "*Father Couplet.*" The indefatigable zeal of this learned Jesuit induced him to go twice to China, the first time in 1659; he remained there till 1680; he published his book in 1687, and after that set out again, but died on the voyage.—*Vide Dict. Hist.*

P. 107. "*Supreme Being.*" The religion of the Chinese seems to have been less encumbered with superstition than that of any other nation: Confucius taught little more than pure Deism, and held an opinion of the soul somewhat like the interior doctrine of Foe, the founder of their faith. Vol. ii. p. 147.

P. 110. "*To hate them.*" The expression probably means no more than how to show his displeasure or resentment, and is not used in the sense in which it was by a modern sage of great celebrity. "Dear Bathurst," said he, "was a man to my very heart's content: he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he hated a Whig: he was a very good hater."—*See Thrale's Anecdotes of Johnson*, p. 83.

P. 115. "*Do to others.*" It is a singular coincidence, that this sentiment, so much applauded in the morality of Jesus Christ, should be found in the writings of a heathen philosopher who lived 2000 years before him. Its merits as a moral precept have lately been disputed by an eminent philosopher. It is not, perhaps, philosophically accurate, but it is practically true; for let any man consult his own breast, and he will find that, if he applies it in every case where he feels himself disposed to commit injustice, he will be powerfully restrained:—it is derived from that principle of self, which is the first motive of all our actions.

P. 117. "*O my.*" For further information on this sub-

ject I refer my reader to Mr. Bryant's learned Dissertation on Moses, p. 215. On this subject also the reader will do well to consult Warburton's Divine Legation, vol. iv. p. 110—a book in which a splendid paradox is most ingeniously and learnedly supported. No conclusion can be more hasty and unfounded than that of the great polemic, p. 120, "that Moses's Egyptian learning was a proof of the divinity of his mission." It is a proof of his Egyptian origin, and nothing further; he only destroyed those customs which tended to keep alive the practice and remembrance of Egyptian idolatry. The liberal Christian will do well to read on this subject Dr. Middleton's excellent letter to Dr. Waterland.—*Vide Middleton's Works*, vol. ii. ed. 4to. The writings of this great divine gave a considerable blow to superstition and implicit belief. The genuine sense of Scripture never had a more able advocate, nor the church a more candid defender.

P. 117. "*The account.*" The existence of evil to a tremendous extent, no man is bold enough to deny: but how to account for it, or reconcile it to their religious opinions, has puzzled even those of the stoutest faith: the best method, however, to get rid of the difficulty, is to dismiss all such fruitless inquiries, and apply ourselves to the practical improvement of society.—*Vide Middleton's Works*, ed. 4to. vol. ii. p. 123.

P. 117. "*Murder.*" By the Jewish law, the crime of wilful murder was punished with death, *vide Ex. xxi. ver. 12*; and though Hume in his History seems to think otherwise, it was only in the case of a beast killing a man that the life of the beast might be commuted for money, *Ex. xxi. ver. 29, 30*. One law of Moses deserves our particular attention, *viz.* that if a man struck a slave, so that he lost an eye, a

limb, or even a tooth, the slave had an instant right to his liberty, *Ex.* xxi. ver. 26, 27. Murder in most barbarous nations was a crime to be obliterated by money; the regular price of different lives is settled by the Saxon laws. *Vide Wilkins.*

P. 117. "*The God.*" Plutarch has a treatise expressly intended to prove that Bacchus was the god worshipped by the Jews: but it is, in my opinion, ουδεν προς Διονυσιον, as the Greeks say, or nothing to the purpose.

P. 120. "*Ten Commandments.*" Bion the philosopher said, "That for God to punish the children for the sins of their fathers, was like giving a man a medicine for the diseases of his grandfather." *Plut. de Sera Num. Vindic.* Moses says differently, *Deut.* chap. xxiv. verse 11. and *Ezek.* xviii. ver. 20.

P. 121. "*The system.*" The merits of Moses as a law-giver can only be estimated by comparing his system of laws with those of other nations, and considering him as a mere man, who like others pretended to have received his laws from heaven. Among these were Mnevis the Egyptian, who said he received his from Mercury; Lycurgus from Apollo; Minos from Jupiter; Zauthrastes from a good Genius; Zamolxis from Vesta; Moses from Iao, or Jehovah; and Numa from Egeria. *Vide Diod. Sic. lib. i. cap. 94.* Many others in different nations have exercised the same pious fraud, which in the early ages of mankind was of considerable use. Josephus evidently considered Moses as a mere human lawgiver using the authority of God to give a sanction to his laws. *Vide Preface to his History.* Ed. Hudson. Oxon. sect. 4.

66 P. 121. "*Penal law.*" The laws of Alfred are founded on those of Moses. *Vide Wilkins, Leges Saxonicae.*

P. 125. "*Forming.*" The general aversion to reading the Bible, which now has hardly any exception but among old women, arises no doubt from the idea, that religion interferes with that generous indulgence of our appetites and passions which is almost inseparable from youth. The ridicule attached to the appearance of sanctity in young men has not been unobserved by the lively humour of Fielding; he makes Joseph Andrews tell Parson Adams, that he had employed all his leisure hours in reading good books; and among these he enumerates the Bible, *The Whole Duty of Man*, Thomas a' Kempis, and Baker's *Chronicle*—the latter a book full of lies and prodigies. The whole character of Joseph Andrews is a fine piece of ridicule on overstrained piety.

P. 125. "*The proverbs.*" The obscurity of proverbs is almost proverbial; for where much is to be said in few words, it is difficult to avoid ambiguity. The Greeks have many of these moral sentences, the earliest of which are collected by Theognis, and published under his name; and the writings of most of their poets are replete with these concise lessons of morality; but none more so than those of Euripides, Pindar, and Æschylus. Apostolius and Zenodotus, or Zenobius, have each published collections of moral aphorisms; but the most complete of all is that of Erasmus. In our own language we have three collections of proverbs, one in Camden's *Remains*, another by Ray, and one also by Grose.

P. 127. "*Tedious repetitions.*" The words wisdom, instruction, and knowledge, are repeated even to satiety; this proves that the whole is a compilation, and shows a want of judgement in the compiler. "Wisdom crieth aloud." *Vide* cap. i. ver. 2, compared with cap. viii. ver. 1.

and ix. 1. cap. ii. ver. 1. and iv. 21. and vii. 1. ii. 18. and vii. 27. Many of the obscurities attending these remnants of ancient wisdom arise no doubt from a faulty translation; and it is much to be wished that a new one should be undertaken, which, avoiding the errors of the old one, may avoid also the conceits of modern language, that ill become so venerable a piece of antiquity. Few attempts of this kind on the Scriptures (as they are called by way of eminence) have hitherto succeeded, and yet much has been done by men of learning towards correcting the errors of the old translation, but they have wanted prudence to avoid the fopperies of a new one. A man of tolerable judgement, without any knowledge of the original language, might avail himself of the immense labours of modern translators, and, by preserving the old dress of the present standard version, might alter some words which either ill express the sense of the author, or have been totally mistaken by former translators. For a specimen of the faulty phrasology of modern versions, I will give a few passages from Hodgson's Translation of the Proverbs. "Scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge," cap. i. ver. 22, he renders, "Libertines take pleasure in vice." Why this alteration? for the old translation is sufficiently intelligible.—Cap. iii. ver. 30, "Strive not with a man without a cause," he has conceitedly rendered, "Contend not through litigiousness with any man." Ver. 34, "Surely he scorneth the scorners," he changes into "Surely deriders will he deride."

P. 127. "*That they.*" Though it can hardly be doubted that such a man as Solomon existed, yet many things that are related of him are so improbable and inconsistent, that they cannot be believed to the extent of the Bible account :

he was a king who most probably had some reputation for wisdom, and therefore the compiler of the Proverbs published them under his name; but they are altogether so irreconcilable with his character, and with every thing else we hear of him, that I have no doubt they were compiled in a much later age than that in which he was said to have lived. The whole account of his riches, his horses, his stables, his provisions, and his empire, has the air of a fable, and deserves to be treated as such. The number of his wives and concubines, the former of which amounted to seven hundred and the latter to three hundred; is also equally improbable, and incompatible with the excellent morality of the Proverbs. Let any man read impartially his history from 1 *Kings*, cap. i. to xii. and 2 *Chron.* cap. i. to cap. x., and then pronounce. The Book of Proverbs, however, has no need of Solomon's support; its own internal excellence is its best defence: and whoever wishes for wisdom at a cheap rate, gathered from the experience of others, let him read the Proverbs by day and by night, and commit them to his mind and memory.

P. 128. "*The Wisdom.*" There is a difference of style to be remarked between this book and the Proverbs, which arises from our having it only in a Greek translation, as it is related in the two prologues which are prefixed to it in our common Bible. It is hardly requisite to remark, that this book, not being written by an inspired person like Solomon, is not considered as of equal authority with the Proverbs by our church; it is not received into the canon of Scripture, and therefore is regarded, even by the faithful, as a mere human composition, though venerable for its good advice and antiquity. The learned have disputed much, and to little purpose, whether Jesus the son of Sirach was the com-

piller or the translator; it is, however, a matter of no great importance: others have disputed at what time the author lived; but this may be pretty nearly conjectured from Jesus's own account;—it could not have been written above a hundred years before him, and he lived in Egypt in the time of Ptolemy Euergetes, or the third Ptolemy. It is called Ecclesiasticus in Latin, to distinguish it from Ecclesiastes, or The Preacher. The latter Jesus, called the Christ, or the Anointed, appears to have been well acquainted with his name-sake, and his apostles not less so, which will appear from the following references:—Compare cap. i. with *James* i. 5; and ii. 15. with *John* xiv. 23; v. 11. with *James* i. 19; v. 13. with *Matt.* xii. 37; vi. 25. with *Matt.* xi. 29; vii. 3. with *Rom.* xii. 15; ix. 5. and 8. with *Matt.* v. 29; xxviii. 6. with *Matt.* vii. 17; xxviii. 2. with *Matt.* vi. 14; xxix. 11. with *Matt.* vi. 20; xli. 21. with *Matt.* v. 28.

P. 135. "*To relate.*" Vide Stanley's History of Philosophy, Cudworth's Intellectual System, and Enfield's History of Philosophy.

P. 150. "*The lessons.*" I am not ignorant of the stories that have been told to the disadvantage of Socrates; but on deliberate examination they will be found to be only venial faults or idle calumnies. For a refutation of these calumnies, see Plato's Symposium, towards the end. Mr. Cumberland in his Observer, vol. 3, has repeated most of them from that industrious gossip Athenæus. We should recollect that even Jesus Christ was called a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners. Aulus Gellius says that Socrates never was ill in his life; and that he never caught the plague, when so many thousands suffered by it at Athens. —Vide *A. Gellius, lib. ii. c. 1, Ed. Gronovii.*

P. 159. "*Is it.*" This somewhat resembles a sentiment of Dr. Johnson on the same subject—"Marriage," said he, "has many pains, and celibacy has no pleasures."

P. 162. "*Debauchery.*" We are told by Petronius Arbiter, that Socrates never saw the inside of a tavern, nor ever frequented public assemblies. The passage as it stands in Petronius, was restored by that most acute critic Janus Rutgersius. His *Vuriæ Lectiones* were first recommended to my notice by my worthy schoolmaster the late Rev. Hugh Moises, whose various learning and happy method of imparting it were only equalled by his polished address, disinterested benevolence, and genuine piety.

P. 165. "*The religion.*" No one who reads the Life and Writings of William Huntingdon, the coal-heaver and Methodist preacher, need wonder any longer at the success of Jesus Christ and his twelve apostles in an age of ignorance and credulity.

P. 168. "*Voltaire.*" These writers are merely Deists, and therefore believe almost as much as Christians. If I have gone further in the search after truth, it is because I could not satisfy myself on the principles of Deism; but I have derived little assistance from those who are called atheistical writers; I have only dipped into Dupuis, and found the greatest part of his book unintelligible, from my ignorance of astronomy. I have never even seen the *Système de la Nature*, which is the Bible of Atheists.

P. 170. "*The Essenes.*" For an account of this remarkable sect, see Prideaux's Connection.

P. 175. "*The refinements.*" A community of good was strictly enjoined by Jesus to his followers, and practised by the early Christians. The only answer which he gave to those who asked what they must do to inherit eternal life

was, "Sell what thou hast, and give it to the poor." *Matt.* xix. 23. *Mark* x. 21. Under such a system, the arts of civilized life must perish, and society be turned into a company of strolling beggars, who depend on the exertions of others for their support.

P. 175. "*To be repressed.*" See this doctrine admirably exemplified in Wilberforce's View of Christianity, and Hannah More's *Cœlebs*. This lady is a complete parson in petticoats.

P. 176. "*The morality.*" The Internal Evidence of Christianity by the late Soame Jenyns, whether written ironically, as a worthy friend of mine has suspected, or seriously, as is generally believed, is certainly not calculated to make Christianity appear in a very favourable light to rational believers; for he considers the virtues it inculcates to be not only new to the world, but much more exalted than any with which mankind were acquainted, and that it does away many which were before considered as such. "The doctrines of Christianity," he says, "require the entire submission of the understanding before they can be received."

Ibid. "*The fathers.*" See Barbeyrac de la Morale de Pères, 4to. 1728.

P. 180. "*Christianity.*" Rousseau, after rejecting the external evidences of Christianity, declares that "the majesty and simplicity of the Gospel speak to his heart." *Vide Emile*, ed. Amst. vol. iii. p. 165. Mr. Godwin in the Memoirs of his wife, tells us, "that though bred in the principles of the Church of England, her religion was little allied to any forms, and was founded rather in taste than in the niceties of polemical discussion." "The tenets of her system were the growth of her own moral taste, and

her religion therefore had always been a gratification rather than a terror to her." P. 33. ed. 1st. The amiable female philosopher Roland, in her *Reflections on Religious Morality*, confesses, that though she disregarded the external evidences of Christianity, she considered its morality as a matter of sentiment and feeling,—as the consolation of the wretched, the support of the unhappy, and the comfort of the unfortunate.—*Vide Œuvres de Roland*, vol. iii. The ceremonies of Popery and the beauties of Christianity have lately been decked out by Chateaubriand, in his *Génie du Christianisme*, in the most gaudy and pompous array, which, though it may suit the one, ill becomes the simplicity of the other. The doctrines of the church, according to his account, are not the subject of profane examination, though its ceremonies and morality are calculated in the highest degree to warm the imagination and interest the feelings; and he has accordingly dressed them in all the splendour which the French language can afford, but it is not the language of Fenelon or Bossuet.

P. 184. "*Sordid interest.*" This subject has lately been treated by Dr. Parr with all the gorgeous pomp of eloquence, with all the specious subtleties of argument, with all the solemn parade of metaphysical disquisition, with all the magisterial weight of authority, and with all the exuberant display of reading for which the Doctor is so eminently distinguished; but without that luminous simplicity of language, or arrangement of ideas, in which the Doctor is so eminently deficient. His meaning is lost in the multitude of his words; it is almost impossible for a plain man to make out what he means; and when with much time and study he has found out the Doctor's drift, he wonders how any man could take so much pains to perplex so plain a sub-

fect. The Doctor would certainly have gained a victory over Mr. Godwin, if Mr. Godwin had not first gained one over himself ; for his candid confession that he had rather overstrained his system of philanthropy, to the exclusion of our private affections, ought to have disarmed the Doctor's wrath, and prevented the display of his hostile weapons ; but the book was written, and it was too great a sacrifice to expect that it should not be published. As the matter now rests, there is very little difference between the divine and the philosopher on the subject of benevolence, except that the latter conceives it the duty of a man to do rather more for the public than his antagonist. Mr. Godwin has published a plain statement of his present opinions, and with the candour of a true philosopher has acknowledged his past faults, so that the Doctor and he ought to shake hands and be reconciled. Among the many errors which the former seems to me to have committed, that of confounding Hobbes, Mandeville, and Rochefoucault with Rousseau and Helvetius, is one of the greatest ; that is to say, the system of gross selfishness, with pure self-love—systems which are as different from each other as the brightness of a limpid stream from the dullness of a stagnant pool. The three first writers view human nature continually on the darkest side, and abandon her with sullen misanthropy as incapable of being improved ; the others lament her defects, but point out the means of amendment.

P. 186. "*The Economy*." The reputation of Lord Chesterfield, to whom it was attributed, supported it for a while ; but after it was known to be the production of Robert Dodsley the bookseller, it ceased to be read by the great, though its remembrance has not yet perished.

P. 192. "*A learned female*." The morality of Epic-

tetus has gained the esteem of two celebrated ladies; for among the letters of Lady Wortley Montague, lately published, are found some specimens of a translation of the Grecian moralist. Mrs. Carter's translation has been long known and admired. It was once proposed to me by the late excellent and invaluable Gilbert Wakefield, to contribute my mite to such a translation.

P. 196. "*Tract on education.*" I am not ignorant that Wytttenbach affirms this treatise to be Plutarch's: but to me it is with a book as with a picture; if it is a good one, I never care whose it is.

P. 202. "*How.*" This treatise has been accurately and elegantly translated by my friend Thomas Northmore.

P. 226. "*Candid examiner.*" Vide Mudford's *Essay on the Life and Writings of Johnson*.

P. 231. "*Plato.*" I refer my readers to the Greek Anthology for an Epigram on the mean origin of man—*Vide Anthol. Ed. Boschii*, vol. i. p. 328, 330. In the second Epigram, Grotius, whose translations should rather be called elegant imitations, has added a line not found in the original, still more expressive of human insignificance:—

Hoc, hominum voce, vocatur homo.

"And this creature is called a man."

P. 236. "*The Stoics.*" Plutarch in a Treatise on the Inconsistencies of the Stoics, has sufficiently proved that these inconsistencies arose from their desire to accommodate themselves to the popular opinion concerning the Gods, and that in reality they believed only in one God, and that God the Universe; sometimes they call it Jupiter, sometimes Fate, Destiny, Nature: *Εἰμαγμενη*, and *Ἀναστασις*, words which cannot possibly be translated.—*Vide Plutarchi Moralia, Ed. Wytttenbach. tom. v. part 1.*

The fragments of a treatise are also left, in which Plutarch tells us the opinions of the principal Grecian philosophers; they mostly agree in believing matter eternal and infinite.—*Tom. v. part 2. p. 746.*

P. 236. "*Unintelligible.*" The doctrines of Plato must ever be viewed with a degree of interest and curiosity, as containing the origin of the Christian theology; for there is no doubt that the Platonic philosophy was the parent stock of the Trinitarian belief, and may be pursued regularly from Plato himself through the school of Alexandria to the Gospel of St. John. Gibbon has furnished ample materials for the search; *vide Hist. vol. iii. ed. oct. p. 315*; and at the same place quoted St. Jérôme, who says that Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, confessed he could not understand the *Timæus* of Plato.

P. 236. "*To this.*" The mischief which the Platonic school of philosophy at Alexandria did to genuine Christianity may be seen by Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist.*, and Robinson's *Eccles. Researches*, p. 51. To detail all the nonsense of Philo, Plotinus, and Proclus, would afford little entertainment to a rational mind; for their disquisitions exhibit only a miserable perversion of human intellect, and an instance of time most pitifully misspent. The gigantic labours of the great modern disciple of Platonism, are a striking proof of the strength and weakness of the human mind; but when connected with purity of life and amiable manners, the errors of intellect may be pardoned.—*Vide Edinburgh Review, No. 27. Ap. 1809.*

P. 237. "*Friendship.*" *Idem velle atque idem nolle ea demum firma amicitia est.*

P. 239. "*He who has.*" The translator of Diogenes Laërtius has committed a curious blunder here, and entirely

spoil the passage. The words in the original are ο φίλος οὐδεις φίλος, vide sect. 21; the sense of which I suppose to be, He who has many friends has none, taking ο for the dative case of the pronoun εἰ; but the bungling translator has understood it to be an exclamation, and rendered it ο amici, amicus nemo, which no man can translate. The acute Helvetius, who was certainly no Greek scholar, has adopted this error.—*Vide l'Esprit, disc. iii. cap. 14.*

P. 241. "The chaos of Hesiod." The lines of Hesiod are:—

Ἦτοι μὲν πρῶτιστ' αἶας γένετ' αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ
Γαί' ευρυστερὸς πάντων ἔδος.

75 P. 243. "His school." By his will he left his house and gardens to his successors for ever, and a part of his fortune for their maintenance. The ruins of this house were in existence when Cicero was at Athens, two hundred years after Epicurus's death; and the Council of Areopagus having granted the ground to one Memmius to build upon, the whole sect of Epicureans, considering it as a kind of profanation, entreated Cicero, through his friend Patro and others, to use his influence to prevent its taking place. His letter to Memmius on the occasion is in the Epist. ad Fam. xiii. 1.—*Vide Middleton's Cicero, vol. ii. p. 173. and Gibbon, vol. vii. p. 147.*

P. 244. "To consider death." Epicurus was not singular in his opinion of death; for Socrates, as quoted by Plutarch, and Plutarch himself, in his consolatory advice to Apollonius for the loss of his son, says thus; "A state of insensibility is a release from care and sorrow; for as there can be no good in such a state, so there can be no evil; and as good and evil can only belong to those who exist, so they can have nothing to do with those who are taken from a

state of existence. They who are dead, therefore, are placed in the same state in which they were before their birth."—*Vide Plut. ed. Wytttenbach, oct. vol. i. p. 433.*

P. 255. "*The Stoics.*" The Stoics, who despised both pleasure and pain, and the Epicureans, who considered them as the summit of good or evil, were a kind of natural enemies to each other.

P. 255. "*His doctrines.*" Diogenes Laertius enumerates all the calumnies against him, among which one was, that he considered the pleasures of the senses as the greatest goods of life. Cicero has adopted this in his *Tusculan Disputations*, lib. 3, and Athenæus has repeated it three different times. Another calumny against him was, that he despised all learning whatever; whereas we find from Diogenes, cap. 121, that it was only the misapplication of learning which he despised. Quintilian has also adopted the mistake, *Inst. ii. c. 18*, and *xii. 1*. Plutarch has followed his example; and it is no wonder that Athenæus, who never stopped to examine what he related, should have repeated the lie. *Vide xii. p. 547.*

P. 256. "*The first.*" Plutarch has two treatises against the Epicurean philosophy, which it is evident he either did not understand, or wilfully chose to misrepresent. He argues as if Epicurus maintained doctrines which he never did maintain, but were the doctrines of his degenerate disciples.

P. 256. "*Defamers.*" Athenæus quotes several passages from these writers in which the philosophy of Epicurus is ridiculed, particularly one from Damascenus describing a cook who vaunted of his qualifications, and comes fresh from the school of Epicurus. Lucian wrote his account of Alexander the impostor expressly to expose a man

who had calumniated Epicurus. *Vide Lucian. Ed. Heust. vol. ii. p. 239, 253, 264.*—For more complete information concerning Epicurus I refer my reader to that storehouse of Greek bibliography, the *Bibliotheca Græca* of Fabricius, edited by Harles, of which twelve volumes are now published.

P. 257. "*Expelled from Rome.*" Montagu's Rise and Fall of ancient Republics. *Vide Nichols's Anecdotes, vol. iv. p. 635.*

P. 258. "*Vulgar ribaldry.*" He expressly says in one place, that Epicurus placed all the happiness of life in the pleasures of the belly, *lib. xii. 546*; but here he misquoted Plutarch, who quoted it from Metrodorus. *Vide Cic. de Nat. lib. iv. 40.*

P. 258. "*The principles.*" The older school of Epicurus in France, met at the house of the celebrated Ninon de L'Enclos; the principal of them were the Countess de Suze, the Countess d'Olonne, and St. Evremont. The second school was more numerous, and the last more decent. *Vide Dictionnaire Historique.*

P. 259. "*Efficient.*" See the Notes of Meibomius, towards the latter end of the Life of Diogenes Laertius. The contrast between the candid remarks of Meibomius, and the coarse ill-nature of the two Casaubons, in their notes on this Life, is curious, and shows the difference between the liberality of true philosophy and the narrow prejudices of ecclesiastical bigotry. Cicero, in his first two books, *De Finibus*, has very fully discussed the merits of the Epicurean philosophy, and in the person of Torquatus has pronounced a most eloquent and perspicuous eulogium on the life and doctrines of his master. Cicero, in his answer to this speech, proceeds on a too limited interpretation of the word pleasure, which Torquatus meant to be understood

in the refined sense of mental gratification arising from the consciousness of acting right. In other parts of his writings, though professing to differ from him, he disdains to calumniate. Many ancient authors have incidentally spoken well of Epicurus. *Juv. Sat.* xiii. and xiv. 319. *Stat. in Tib. Man. Sylv.* i. 90. Horace was a disciple of Epicurus, and Virgil an admirer: vide *Donati Vita Virgilii cum Notis Heynii*, vol. i. Stanley, in his *Lives of the Philosophers*, and the writer of his *Life*, have both shown an evident partiality for the morality of Epicurus, which may be seen by those who refer to the parts of the book just mentioned.

P. 269. "*The New Academy.*" The doctrines and history of the different sects of philosophy in Greece may be found in various authors: Clemens Alexandrinus, in his *Stromata*, lib. 228 to 309, has the most ancient account. Stanley and Brucker are the best general modern historians of philosophy, though the former comprehends only the ancient; and Middleton in his *Life of Cicero* has given the descent of the Academy. Vol. 3. Enfield's *History of Philosophy*, which is a judicious translation and abridgement of Brucker, may be also consulted: though such books cannot be read entirely, they are useful for reference, and they display a dismal waste of intellect on subjects of little utility.

P. 271. "*Deduces the right.*" Ergo unum debet esse omnibus propositum, ut eadem sit utilitas uniuscujusque et universorum, quam si ad se quisque rapiat, dissolvetur omnis humana consortio, *lib.* iii. 6. Quod si nihil est tam contra naturam quam turpitudine, nihilque tam secundum naturam quam utilitas, certe in eadem re utilitas et turpitudine non esse potest. *Ed.* 7.

P. 274. "*The proper study.*" Pope, who was a great borrower, has taken the very words of this sentiment from Charron :—

Le vrai étude de l'homme, c'est l'homme.

Charron de la Sagesse, Preface au Premier Livre.

P. 286. "*The moral.*" Dr. Paley was a man of great strength and clearness of intellect ; on most subjects he saw what was right, but he durst not always embrace it ; he generally tried to make a compromise between his reason and his interest ; he did not wish to be rich, but he was too indolent to run the risk of being poor.

P. 306. "*The Scripture.*" I have lately found that Casimir Litzinsky entertained the same opinion, for which he was executed at Grodno in 1689 as an Atheist.

P. 308. "*Man never satisfied.*" Vide Heliodori *Æthiopica*, Ed. Comm. p. 103.

P. 308. "*A modern.*" We are certain that infinite power cannot be employed without effect, nor infinite wisdom without design ; we may therefore rationally conclude, that this world could be designed for nothing more than a prison, in which we are to receive punishment for offences committed in a former, and to prepare ourselves for the enjoyment of happiness in a future existence.—*Jenyns's Disquisitions*, p. 30.

P. 310. "*The evidence.*" The resurrection of a dead body, after having lain two whole days in the grave, is a fact so contrary to the common sense of mankind as not to be capable of proof by any human testimony, and therefore, to acquire any degree of credit, should have been frequently repeated and generally attested : but it happens that in the New Testament the fact is not sufficiently attested, and the fact and the argument are at variance with each other ; for

they who believe St. Paul to have been an inspired apostle, must allow that his account of the resurrection is to be trusted; and yet in his famous xvth chapter of the 1st Corinthians, from verse 3d, the whole of his argument tends to prove that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" which means, that we must put on a new body in order to be raised from the dead, for "that which is mortal cannot inherit immortality;" and yet, when Jesus means to prove to Thomas the certainty of his resurrection, he called to him to "thrust his hand into his right side," that he might be convinced he bore the same body which had been crucified.

- 2 P. 310. "*The analogy.*" Bishop Butler, in his celebrated *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed*—a book more remarkable for metaphysical refinement than sound reasoning—rests his whole argument upon the divine origin of the system of nature: and taking that for granted, he infers, that revelation coming from the same author, is liable to the same defects, and that they who believe the one must of consequence believe the other, because its defects are not greater; but this is taking two things for granted which ought to be proved independently of each other. His arguments for a future life are composed of equally gratuitous assumptions; his two first are utterly destitute of foundation. The first is, "That having already undergone many changes from our birth to maturity, we should naturally infer that we shall exist hereafter:" but he forgets that these changes are gradual and imperceptible, and that there is no gulf between them like that of death: he argues also from the changes of animals, viz. worms into butterflies, &c.; and, to be candid, is forced to allow them also a future state of existence. His second

reason is still more bold than the first ; for he says, "That having the faculties and capacities of action before death is a presumption that we shall possess them after." And again, "Knowing that all other animals are possessed of these powers up to the very period to which we have faculties capable of tracing them, is itself a probability of their retaining them *beyond* it, and this is confirmed by remarking the very great changes we have ourselves experienced." This may be orthodoxy, but it is not argument.

P. 312. "*Capable of proof.*" That the idea of a God is not innate, but the result of reasoning, is evident from this circumstance, that Sabeism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies, is the earliest religion. *Vide Plato Cratylus*, p. 258. Diodorus Siculus, *lib. iii.* 8, tells us that many of the Ethiopians believe not in any gods, and even curse the sun, running into the marshes at his rising. *Vide also Strabo p. 822. Ed. Amst.*

P. 312. "*The Scripture.*" Whoever will take the trouble to consult Plutarch's Treatise, ed. Wytttenbach, *Tom. iv.* p. 2, *Περὶ τῶν ἀρεσκόντων τοῖς φιλοσοφοῖς*, will see from whence men first derived their notions of the gods. It arose, he tells us, from contemplating the beauty and regularity of the heavenly bodies. The sky they called the father, and the earth the mother of all things. Nature, it is evident from hence, was the first god, and the different operations of Nature being subdivided, formed many other gods. It is somewhat singular, and worthy of remark, that though omnipotence is the greatest attribute of God, yet there are many things which even God cannot do; he is bounded by Nature or Necessity; he cannot make the same thing to be, and not to be; he cannot make the past present; he cannot make snow black; fire cold; no

crooked straight; in short, he cannot alter the order of Nature: he is, therefore, not omnipotent.

P. 312. "*Its own punishment.*" Vide Plutarch, *Περὶ τῶν ὑπο τοῦ θεοῦ*. Ed. Wytttenbach, Tom. iii. part 1. p. 244.

P. 313. "*A monkey.*" A wicked man is a much more mischievous animal than a monkey.

Simia quam turpis simillima bestia nobis.

Vide Ennii Fragmenta, p. 140. Ed. Hessel.

Plato says that the most sacred of all things is a good man, and a bad one the most profane. *Vide Dial. Minos.*

P. 313. "*Privileges.*" Pindar thus describes the frail and perishable nature of man:—

Ἐπαμειβοί, τίδε τις; τίδ' οὐτις;

Σκιάς ὄναρ ἀνθρώπου.

P. 316. "*To be inquisitive.*" We think we know a great deal about a future life, whereas we know nothing.

Vano error vi lusinga

Poco vedete, et parvi veder molto.

Petrarca Canzone 16.

P. 316. "*To be just.*" Το δε ευ ζην, εστι κοινωνικως ζην, και φιλικως και σωφρονως και δικαιοως.

Plut. Προς Κολωτην, Tom. v. pars prima.

P. 318. "*Matter.*"

Ἄλλο δέ σοι ἔρεω: φύσις οὐδεν ἀεστεῖν ἑκάστου,

θνητῶν, οὐδε τίς οὐλομένη θάνατοιο γενεθλή,

Ἄλλα μόνον μίξις τε διαλλαξίς τε μίγνυντων,

Ἔστι, φύσις δ' ἐπὶ τοῖς ὀνομάζεται ἀνθρώποισι.

Empedocles in Plutarcho adversus Colotem.

P. 318. "*We are convinced.*" Vide Plato *De Legibus*, lib. iii. sub initio.

P. 321. "*The miseries.*" A Christian bishop of the fourth century, in a novel full of interest and entertainment,

tells us, that the Divinity never allows us to taste of pleasure without a proportionate mixture of pain and misfortune.—*Vide Heliodori Æthiopica, lib. 5.* Plato says,

Πολυ γαρ ελαττω τ' αγαθα των κακων ημιν.

De Repub. lib. 1.

P. 321. "*Though many.*" The wars which have been excited on account of religion—a thing which, if it has any use, should be to promote peace—have, upon a moderate calculation, cost the world nine millions seven hundred and eighteen thousand eight hundred persons, shot, drowned, burnt, tortured, and hanged, for the love of God and the honour of his Son. The foreign and intestine wars which have at different times ravaged the world, cannot be computed to have cost a less number; so that, taking into consideration also the miseries which men cause to each other, short of death, it seems as if one half of the world was formed to torment the other.

The great object of nature, after bringing a man into the world, is how to get him out of it; and we shall find that in every man are implanted the seeds of destruction, which "grow with his growth, and strengthen with his strength;" for all he eats, drinks, or does, only tends to that dissolution of the material frame, which to some men arrives sooner, and to others later; and so different are the effects of these different causes upon different bodies, that it seems as if there were some people whom nothing can kill, and others whom nothing can keep alive.

P. 325. "*Redundant population.*" The doctrine of population as the origin of evil, seems to have been obscurely seen by Chrysippus, one of the sect of Stoics; for in a treatise on the Gods, which Plutarch quotes, he says, "As cities abounding in population send out colonies or under-

take wars to relieve themselves, so God is the author of destruction for the same purpose." And again, "The Trojan war was caused by the gods as a drain for the excess of population." The whole chapter is well worth attention.—*Plutarch. Moral. Ed. Wytttenbach, Tom. v. p. 1. c. 32.*

P. 325. "*Man in.*" Mr. Hobbes has been much censured for affirming that a state of nature is a state of war. Vide *Leviathan*, p. 85 : but the experience of all ages and nations bears testimony to the truth of his assertion. The laws of nature, such as equity, justice, mercy, &c. are so contrary to our natural passions, that is to say, the natural desire of every man to get all he can for himself, that without the terror of some power to enforce their observance, they are nothing; and even covenants without the sword are but words.

P. 328. "*To prolong.*"

Ἦδυ τι θάρσαλαίς

Τὸν μακρὸν τενεῖν βίον

Ἐλπίσι, φαναις

Θυμὸν ἀλδαινοῦσαν ἐν εὐφροσυναίς.

Æsch. Prom. 536.

P. 329. "*Period.*" The origin of most chronic disorders is the stomach; it is therefore not only the quality but the quantity of what we eat which ought to be attended to; for even in times of scarcity more people die from eating too much than too little: riches produce more diseases than poverty. Herodotus tells us, that the Ægyptians believe all diseases to proceed from what we eat and drink. *Vide lib. ii. p. 139. Ed. Wesseling.*

P. 330. "*All this happens.*" The idea of an overruling Providence is not an idea which naturally strikes an igno-

/// P. 334. "*All are.*" Levat enim dolorem, communis quasi legis et humanæ conditionis recordatio. *Vide Cicero Ep. ad Fam. lib. vi. p. 6.*

12 P. 335. "*The consolations.*" Belief is the sum total of religion; even the Deist must believe much more than he can comprehend, and to be consistent he ought to believe in miracles; for that Being who first established the order of nature, can surely, whenever he sees fit, suspend that order, and interpose for a particular purpose. They who believe that any Being created matter out of nothing, believe in the greatest of all miracles, and to such a Being nothing can be impossible. We none of us know any thing beyond the material world in which we exist; to dive into the causes of things is too much for our limited intellects: therefore the safest thing is to believe nothing we cannot comprehend.

NOTES

To the Essay on Liberty and Necessity

P. 337. "Divines." To enumerate all the divines who have attempted to solve the difficulties of this subject, to reconcile faith and reason, would be to transcribe verbatim the opinions of divinity, a task for which I have no inclination. I have got to the bottom of all their mud and mire, and to firm ground; for I believe nothing that I cannot understand, how little soever that may be; and on these grounds, if every man would ingenuously confess his ignorance, the sum of our knowledge would be found to lie in a narrow space. The number of moral philosophers who have attempted to solve the difficulties of Liberty and Necessity is not much less than that of the divines who have tried to bring reason and theology together: the subject is not discussed with greater force of argument, vivacity, and temper, than in the correspondence between Voltaire and Frederic of Prussia; the monarch had the best side of the question, but neither was deficient in elegance and turned compliment; they disputed like philosophers and like gentlemen, not like angry pedants tenacious of their own opinions; and their dispute is a model of philosophical discussion and polite controversy.—*Vide Œuvres Posthumes de Frederic II. vol. vi. ed. Lond.*

Though much has been written on the doctrine of necessity, and many forcible arguments have been adduced to prove its existence, it has not yet found many pros and for this reason; it is inconsistent with the belief

of the principal doctrines of Christianity ; for no man who believes in the force of Necessity, can believe himself the subject of future reward or punishment. Lord Kaimes has answered all the objections to this doctrine on the ground of immorality ; and his essay is one of the best which the subject can afford.—*See also Jenyns's Miscellanies, and Boswell's Life of Johnson, p. 327. ed. 4to. Hume's Essays, vol. ii. Godwin on Political Justice. Belsham's Moral Philosophy. Hartley on Man, &c. &c.*

The poets, even on so unpromising a subject, have attempted to submit the subtleties of argument to the trammels of verse ; and have reasoned on fate, free-will, and necessity.—Milton is a believer in free-will, and puts his opinions into the mouth of God Almighty.—*Vide Par. Lost, book iii. l. 95 to 134.* Dryden favours the contrary opinion, and thus argues in his Palamon and Arcite :—

The Power that ministers to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what God foresees,
Call'd Providence, or Chance, or fatal Sway,
Comes with resistless force, and finds or makes her way ;
Nor kings, nor nation, nor united power,
One moment can retard th' appointed hour.
And some one day, some wondrous chance appears,
Which happen'd not in centuries of years ;
For sure whate'er we mortals hate or love,
Or hope or fear, depends on powers above ;
They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foresight necessitate our will.

The writings of the ancients abound with proofs of their belief in an over-ruling Necessity, which the Greeks called by various names, and the Latins *Necessitas* and *Fatum* ;

the force of destiny they believed to be superior to that of the gods, and the *dæmon* of Socrates means nothing more than the power of necessity.—*Vide Plutarch. Περὶ Σωκρατους Δαιμονίου*, p. 343. Ed. Wyttenbach. I had conceived it must mean this, long before I had read the passage to which I now refer my readers. Euripides has a strong passage to the same purpose.—*Vide Ion. l. 1393*; and another, *l. 1408*. Juvenal says also,

Fata regunt homines.

Sat. ix. ver. 3

Though my memory does not immediately supply me with all the passages I have read on this topic, yet any man conversant with the classics will be at no loss to convince himself of what I affirm. I have selected a few which may serve to show the general tendency of heathen belief on this subject.

The treatise of Plutarch on Fate contains some very strong passages on the subject of necessity. “All things,” says he, “in heaven and in earth are constituted by original necessity, and governed by the same, through the revolutions of time and eternity.” He then endeavours to reconcile this notion of necessity with the idea of providence, free-will, and contingency; in which he is by no means successful, and argues like a man who does not understand his subject, and is restrained in his inquiry after truth by some latent prejudice. To this it may be answered that the belief of the heathens is of no consequence to those who have the light of the gospel to guide us; but in my humble opinion, the belief of the wisest heathens is preferable to that of those who believe in revelation; for the one is the effect of unclouded reason, the other of blind superstition. The following passages are a few, among many

to prove the existence of that necessity by which all the universe is linked together:—

Την πεπωμενην μοιρα, αδυνατον εστι αποφυγειν και δεω.

Herod. lib. 1.

Ουδεν ισχυροτερον, αναγκης και τυχης.

Diod. Sic. lib. xv. cap. 63.

Αναγκαιη μεγαλη θεος. *Callim. Hymn. in Delum, l. 122.*

Δεινη γαρ αναγκη παντα κρατουμει. *Orphæi Hymn. 3.*

Manilius opens his fourth book with a long passage on the influence of Necessity, or what he calls the Fates. Ammianus Marcellinus ends his fourth book with a similar passage; but he calls Fate, or Necessity, *Adrastia*: he has also a quotation from Menander as follows:—

Απαντι δαιμων ανδρι συμπαραισταται

Ευθυς γενομενω, μυσταγωγός του βίου

which he says, *salva firmitate fatali*, attends on every man as the guide of his actions; but this dæmon is no more than Necessity, that *Natalis Comes*, which accompanies every man through the world. Ammianus begins his sixteenth book, “*Hæc, per orbem Romanum fatorum ordine contexto versante.*”

Δεινον γαρ ουδεν των αναγκαιων βροτοις.

Ed. Wytt. Tom. i. p. 438. Plutarch. Param.

Ισχυροτατον αναγκη, κρατει γαρ παντων. *Thales.*

Αναγκη ουδε θεοι μαχονται. *Pittacus.*

Παντα αναγκη και αρμονια γενεσθαι. *Philolaus.*

Παντα γενεσθαι κατ’ ειμαρμενην. *Heraclitus.*

Της δινης αιτιας ουσης, της γενεσεως παντων, ην αναγκην λεγει,

Democritus ap. Diog. Laert.

Το της αναγκης εστ’ αδηριτον σθενος. *Æsch. Prom. 105.*

Sæpissime apud philosophos et tragicos veteres, hoc genus consolationis quod ex *necessitate* petitur, occurrit, in quo

videmus parum esse præsidii ad recreandum, tamen ad animum *firmandum et roborandum* nullam ei vim inesse, non concedimus.—*Schutzi Notæ ad Æschylum*, vol. i. p. 42.

Ὅστις δ' ἀνάγκη συνκεχωρηκεν βροτῶν,

Ἀριστος εἶναι σωφρονεῖν μοι δοκεῖ. *Euripides.*

Nec rupit fati necessitatem humanis consiliis.

Liv. lib. i. c. 42. Ed. Oron. 1814.

It is hardly possible to open any Greek or Roman writer without finding the power of Necessity acknowledged in almost every page as superior to all human power, and even to that of the gods; in short, as coeval with the existence of matter, and existing from eternity. Livy has these words: "ut pareatur Necessitati, quam ne Dii quidem superant." *Lib. ix. c. 4.* Hesiod acknowledges the gods to have been created, and to be the produce of Earth and Heaven; and the whole story of Prometheus is no more than an allegory to represent mankind struggling with the evils of Nature, and submitting at last to Necessity.

ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἀνάγκης

Καὶ πολυιδρὶν εὐντα, μέγας κατὰ δεσμός ἐρυκεῖ.

Hesiod. Theog. l. 615. Æsch. Prom. 436 to 470.

Τέχνη δ' ἀνάγκης ἀσθενέστερα μακρῶ.

Æsch. Prom. 514.

Τούτων ἀρ' ὁ Ζεὺς ἐστὶν ἀσθενέστερος,

Οὐκ οὖν ἀν' ἐκφυγοὶ γέ τῃν πεπρωμένην.

Æsch. Prom. 517.

Ἐμπῆς ὁ τι μοῖρα παθεῖν οὐκ ἐς ἐπαλῦξαι

Ὅτι δέ μοῖρα παθεῖν οὔτε δεδοικα παθεῖν. *Theognis.*

Τί γε μοῖσιμον παρ-

φυκτόν.

Pind. Pyth. 12. 52.

See also *Aulus Gellius, lib. vi. c. 2.*

The God of the Jews and the Christians is nothing more

than the all-powerful Necessity of the Heathens, clothed with human attributes; and for my own part, I had rather submit to the latter than the former; because in suffering misfortune by the will of Providence, I feel myself treated with unkindness and unjust partiality; but in suffering under an inevitable necessity, I experience no more than the common lot of all human beings. *Vide Lucian's Ζευς Ελεγχομενος* (Jupiter confuted), in which he boldly asserts the power of Fate over gods and men. *Ed. Hemst. vol. ii. p. 626.*

Φερειν τε χρη τα τε δαιμονια αναγκαιως τα τε των πολεμισων ανδρειως. *Thucyd. lib. ii. c. 64.*—Διος και Ζηνος ονοματι, ποτε μεν τον θεον, ποτε δε την τυχην, πολλακις δε την ειμαρμενην προσαγορευουσιν. *Plut. de audiend. Poetis, Ed. Wyt. 87.*

Χω Ζευς αλλοκα μεν πελει αιθριος, αλλοκα δ' υει.

Theocr. Idyll. iv. 43.

P. 340. "*Jupiter is the air.*"

Isthic is est Juppiter, quem dico, Græci vocant Aëra, quique ventus est et nubes.

Ennii Fragm. Ed. Hessel. p. 180.

P. 341-42. "*A particular interposition of Providence.*"

The opinion of Dr. Hawkesworth on this topic is said to have cost him his life; for the clamour excited against him by priests and bigots on account of a passage in the preface to the first Voyages of Byron and Cook, in which he ventured to deny the doctrine of a particular Providence, had an effect upon his health and spirits which he could not surmount.

P. 344. "*The root of all morality.*" A modern philosopher, of no small authority, has shown very forcibly, that the efficacy of moral instruction, and consequently of morality, is by no means diminished by this doctrine; for, says he, "If the human mind were not ruled by motives, this

art could not possibly have any existence." *Vide Forryth's Principles of Moral Science*, a book which contains many new and interesting views of man and society.

P. 345. "*The mechanism.*" According to the system of Necessity, vice is no more in our own power than virtue: we act in both cases under the impressions which certain objects make upon our senses, and these senses move our desires, desires operate on the will, and the will produces the action: the rectitude or depravity of any man's conduct therefore, depends on the impressions which he receives in his youth; for these impressions, frequently repeated, become habits, and form the character of the man: here will be seen the necessity of a virtuous education. Let a man be alarmed at the idea of his being a mere machine for at any rate he is not of his own making, and therefore has no more right to claim a liberty of action, than the right of making himself; he can do nothing which is not intended by a superior power, and therefore he need not fear being impelled to vice by an irresistible propensity; for such is the will of Providence, it is not in his power to resist, though he may suffer for his imprudence: I will not venture to maintain that whatever is, is right; but I will affirm that it cannot be otherwise than it is.

P. 350. "*To interpret.*" Among many instances that might be produced of oracles and men pretending to know the will of God, the two which are now cited are, the one the most serious, and the other the most ridiculous:—The Carians, when attacked by Harpagus, one of Cyrus's generals, and threatened with the loss of their liberty, determined to defend themselves by cutting a canal across the isthmus, and make their country an island; but finding some difficulty in it from the rocky nature of the ground

they consulted the oracle of Apollo at Delphos, who returned them for answer, "That they must desist, for Jupiter would have made their peninsula an island, if he had chosen it." *Herod. lib. i. c. 174.*—In the reign of Charles II. of Spain, it was proposed by some Dutchmen to render the Tagus navigable from Lisbon to Madrid. On the proposal being laid before the council of Castile, they returned for answer, after much deliberation, "That if God had chosen it to be so, he would have made it so; and therefore they begged leave to reject the proposal."—*Rev. E. Clarke's Letters on the Spanish Nation, Letter 15.*

P. 351. "*Anima mundi.*" It is somewhat singular, that as the vital spirit of man has been personified under the name of the soul, so the vital principle of the universe has been personified under the name of God; and yet neither can be proved to have any separate existence distinct from matter.

P. 351. "*If by a God is meant.*" Virgil, who leaned considerably to the doctrines of Epicurus, has expressed this meaning fully in two lines:

Totamque infusa per artus.

Mens agitat molem, et magno æ corpore miscet.

Æn. vi. 727.

Vide also Georg. ii. ver. 327; with Heyne's Notes.



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